THE LIVING AGE

Founded by E. LITTELL in 1844

NO. 3999

FEBRUARY 26, 1921

A WEEK OF THE WORLD

A PESSIMISTIC FORECAST

FRANKFURTER ZEITUNG refuses to believe in the sincerity of the armistice-peace concluded at Riga last autumn between the Bolsheviki and Poles. It remarks that the soviet government was interested only in saving its army and defeating Wrangel. It has succeeded brilliantly in both these efforts, and in addition has crushed Petljura in the Ukraine, and Balakovich in White Russia. Its forces have overrun Armenia and are threatening Georgia. Although conditions at home seem to be growing steadily worse, the Bolshevist leaders are apparently ready to press new foreign enterprises. While Poland was doubtless the aggressor in its offensive last summer, Russia seems now to have become the challenging party. According to Polish reports, the Bolsheviki have six hundred thousand men massed on the Polish front, while the Russian negotiators are delaying, by every device possible, converting the present armistice into a definite peace. Of course, the Russians have complaints against the Poles, who are charged with failure to comply with their engagements under the armistice agreement. On the whole, this usually well informed journal does not look forward hopefully to a peaceful summer in Eastern Europe.

PRUSSIAN ELECTION POSSIBILITIES

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG predicts that the Prussian elections to be held on February 20 will be of the utmost significance for Germany's political future. Since the former kingdom's National Assembly was elected, almost on the morning of the revolution, to serve as an *ad interim* legislative body and constitutional convention, the other German states have adopted more permanent forms of government. But none of these looms so large in the constellation of German states as Prussia, and none has so many special problems to settle. Most important of all is whether Prussia is to be a republic or monarchy, although that question has not hitherto been brought as prominently to public attention as the issue justifies. It is perhaps suggestive, that ex-Kaiser Wilhelm is being increasingly alluded to by German historians and journalists of monarchist sympathies as 'the King.'

Our readers will recall that this is

Copyright, 1921, by The Living Age Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the title of a book, by a former journalist intimate of the Kaiser's, from which we took the first article in our issue of February 5.

FRANCE COMBATS DEPOPULATION

SOME two years ago, *caisses de compensation* were organized in France to insure the payment to working families of extra wages proportioned to the number of children they included. This supplementary wage is known as the *sursalaire familial.* Although the movement is in its infancy, at the general meeting of the *caisses* recently held at Roubaix, most optimistic reports were presented as to the success realized in assisting families of wage earners to meet the high cost of living, and in counteracting the evils of depopulation. A weaver and his wife are able to earn 260 francs a week where there are no children in the family and both are regularly employed, while another weaver, with a wife and children requiring the presence of the mother at home, would have only 160 francs to support the larger number in his household. The purpose of the *sursalaire familial* is to compensate for this inequality. During the four months ending with the first of July, over 4,000,000 francs have been distributed among 40,000 workingmen's families for this purpose. The National Federation of Linen Manufacturers pays 240 francs a year supplementary wage to families having one child under thirteen, 600 francs to families having two children, and so on in increasing proportions, to a maximum of 4200 francs a year where there are seven children. Beyond this limit, the increment is 35 francs a month for additional children.

BOOK OUTPUT STATISTICS

L'OPINION publishes statistics showing the decrease in the number of books published in various countries during and since the war. In a comparison of the five-year periods ending respectively with 1913 and with 1918, Germany leads the list by a large margin in both instances. The total number of books published in that country exceeded 165,000 in the earlier period and 104,000 in the later period. Before the war, France came next to Germany with 60,000 books a year, while the United States stood third with nearly 59,000. Following the war, the United States ranked next to Germany with 51,000, Great Britain followed with 47,000, Italy ranked fourth, and France fifth, its publications for the five years during the war period falling to less than 28,000 per annum. In all these countries, the greatest decrease was in text books and scientific publications. Works upon the war were very popular for two years, but since then have declined steadily in favor. Exclusive of war works, books upon history have also declined. The only two classes of books of which the publication has markedly increased, are works upon religion and collections of poems. This applies to both Catholic and Protestant works. The increased demand for poetry began to manifest itself in 1915 in Europe, and one year later in the United States. A larger number of medical books has been published of late in all the belligerent countries.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[*L'Action Francaise* (Jingo Royalist Daily), *January 16*]

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF GREECE

BY DR. STEPHEN CHAUVET

[The author of this article is a very eminent European physician, well known for his investigations in the border land between medical science, psychology, and sociology.]

PASCAL says in a famous passage of his *Pensées*, that if Cleopatra's nose had been shorter the face of the world would have been different.

A paradox? Unhappily, no. The destinies of nations often hang on apparently insignificant facts. Who could have foreseen, two months ago, that the Greek people, after rising to the dizziest heights of success, thanks to the political genius of Venizelos, after realizing their age long dream of becoming a great power, should suddenly be faced by a historical convulsion compromising all their hopes for the future — on account of a monkey bite? Had there been no monkey, or had there been a competent physician present to recognize the necessity of immediate precautions after the wound, the history of the Greek people would have been different.

As things turned out, the death of the king made it necessary for the cabinet to appeal to the country, and the whole world was stunned with surprise to see a man who had rendered such unexampled service to his nation suddenly cast aside; and a banished king, who, by his perverse policy, had gravely compromised the future of his people, recalled to the throne.

These events, so surprising to strangers, and what is worse, so unanticipated by the short-sighted governments of other lands, are easily explained. What we have been told about these occurrences is absolutely wrong. To understand them we must in the first place know certain historical facts, and in the second place know the psychology of individuals and of crowds, and in particular, the psychology of the Greek nation. Peoples, in fact, like individuals, respond more readily to their impulses than to their reason.

This is why it is so much to be regretted that our statesmen, who are utterly ignorant of the psychology of crowds and the psychology of nations, constantly neglect to seek the advice of experts on these subjects. How many blunders both at home and abroad might be thus avoided! But to get back to the Greek people, we face the same problem that we do when an individual commits an incomprehensible act. In that case we call in a mental specialist — a man who has studied thoroughly both normal and abnormal psychology; and we examine the patient scientifically, so as to unravel the motives for his actions, to discover how far he is responsible for them. Let us study in the same way the collective mentality of the Greek people, in order to ascertain the causes for their sudden change. These causes are of four kinds: mystical, political, material, and hereditary.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The mystical causes are five in number:

1. First of all, every adult Greek has been rocked to sleep in his infancy, to patriotic lullabies prophesying that a great Constantine would appear after a lapse of centuries, to become the heir of Constantine XIII and reconquer Constantinople, lost by that heroic monarch in 1453, when he was killed, defending it against the Turks.

2. The Greek people are ignorant of the secrets of the General Staff, and of the blunders which Constantine committed when, as Crown Prince, he led their armies. The present king is in their eyes the hero who recovered for Greece, Macedonia, Epirus, Crete, and the Aegean Islands, during the war with Turkey; and eastern Macedonia, with Kavala, Seres, and Drama after the war in 1913 with the Bulgarians. Now, to cite but a single fact — when Constantine was in command of the Greek army, in 1912, he obstinately persisted in continuing his advance against Monastir against explicit orders; and it took the intervention of his father, who was then king, and the threat of the cabinet to resign, to make him renounce that purpose and march to Saloniki. He entered the latter city in October 1912, only six hours ahead of the Bulgarians, who were then his allies. Had he not reached the city first, Saloniki would never have belonged to the Greeks. Similarly, Constantine neglected his opportunity to march on Sofia after the Bulgarian debacle. But the masses know nothing of this. He is in their eyes Great Constantine, the Conqueror.

3. When Princess Catherine was born, in 1913, the eminent statesman, who has just been overthrown, suggested to the king that he make the army her godfather, and the navy her godmother. Ten soldiers and ten sailors symbolically represented these two arms of national defense at the baptismal ceremony. That rite created a close bond between the army and navy, and their sovereign, and left an indelible imprint upon popular sentiment.

4. At the suggestion of Venizelos again, King Constantine announced himself, from 1913 to 1916, the godfather of every seventh child born to any family in Greece, regardless of the family's rank or social standing. The result was that during three years the king became a 'relative,' as they say in Greece, *of more than sixty-five thousand Greek families!* This royal action not only flattered highly a very large number of the king's subjects — and we must not forget that they are an impulsive and enthusiastic southern race — but acquired peculiar importance, on account of the seriousness the Greeks attach to this relationship. They regard a godfather as a real blood relative. This explains the cry so commonly heard during the election for the king's recall, *Zito o Koumbaros!* (Long live our godfather!) shouted by his enthusiastic followers.

5. The last element in the mystical hold which Constantine possesses over the Greek people is the fact that this sovereign, prophesied by the nation's poets, having the army as the godfather, and the navy as the godmother of his daughter, and himself bound by a tie almost as strong as that of blood to sixty-five thousand families among his subjects, was, furthermore, in the eyes of the people, a martyr.

Our own lack of psychological insight was responsible for surrounding the king with that aureole of sympathy and love so dangerous to ourselves. When his overt hostility to the Entente finally induced us to decide on his dethronement, it would have been wisest to have used the patriotic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Venizelist army at Saloniki to carry out our purpose. Had we done this, the Greek nation, which is intensely patriotic and solicitous for the true welfare of the country, would have conceived a just opinion of the sovereign who had compromised the nation's future. There is a shrewd old saying that dirty linen should be washed at home. Now in spite of timely advice to the contrary, the Allies committed the blunder of employing English and French troops to dethrone the king — *and the French detachment included negro units from Senegal!* The effect was doubly unfortunate. It made the king, in the eyes of his subjects, a martyr persecuted by foreigners; and furthermore, the pride and self-respect of the whole Greek nation was outraged by our use of black troops to carry out this purpose. Their bitter resentment is so keen to-day, that during the last campaign, Greeks would appear at election rallies with their faces blackened with soot!

Political motives likewise played a very important part. While Venizelos was necessarily absent from the country, assisting in drafting the treaty of peace (?), his partisans, without his knowledge, ran the government in an arbitrary way, which alienated a great number of citizens. Venizelist officials persecuted their political opponents with blind stupidity. These tyrannical measures were resented the more, because they had been preceded by an era of true freedom during the earlier premiership of Venizelos, immediately after the popular revolution some years ago, which overthrew not the king but the old arbitrary form of government.

So intimidated were the people by Venizelist officials, that great numbers of them resorted during the last campaign to a device adopted under earlier tyrannical régimes, and professed themselves ardent Venizelists, in order to vote without hindrance for his opponents.

Thus it came about that a statesman, consistently liberal at heart, was so ill-served by his stupid political supporters, that their abuses of authority during his absence inspired the nation with violent hatred for himself.

In the third place, there were material grievances. Constantine's partisans used the delay in the demobilization of the army as a powerful argument in their favor. They circulated the report that Venizelos had agreed to have the Greek troops occupy Asia Minor up to the border of Cilicia, in order to form a junction with the French forces in the latter province, and that this would necessitate not only delaying demobolization, which the people eagerly demanded, but even calling to the colors additional classes of the population. They told the people further, that if the king were recalled, all this would be avoided, and in addition peace would be speedily concluded with the Turks, because the Kemalists feared Constantine and would immediately come to terms with him.

Last of all is the hereditary factor. Races, like individuals, have their hereditary traits. This is especially true of the Greeks, who, in obedience to the law of 'persistent mentality.' preserve many of the qualities of character which they possessed in the earlier ages of their history.

Men of every country resent the intellectual superiority and renown of any great man among them, if they are aware of its existence. They will not stand behind such a man for a long period, no matter how valuable his public services may be. The Greeks resemble every other people in this respect. They had heard Venizelos

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

incessantly lauded to the sky as the greatest Greek of modern times, as the ablest diplomat of any land. His indisputable superiority and world-wide fame had offended many of his fellow countrymen. The same qualities bestowed upon him an authority which, supported as it was by the gratitude he merited for his immense service to his country, seemed likely to give him an indefinite lease of power, and therefore to exclude his political opponents from office for many years to come. For these reasons, in any country Venizelos would sooner or later have had to pay the penalty for an eminence which blocked so many hopes and embittered so many envious and mediocre rivals. That is the historic Calvary of every great man. But in addition to that, Venizelos was ruling over a nation which throughout its long history has been characterized by extreme mobility of sentiment, has been a prey to irresistible impulses, and has displayed notorious ingratitude toward its own great men. It was the Greeks who in their early days invented ostracism, to disembarrass themselves of statesmen who had no other fault than his great talents and devotion to the public weal. We need hardly recall that Aristides was banished in 485 B.C. because the people were tired of hearing him called 'The Just.' Themistocles, the conqueror of the Persians and the creator of Athenian supremacy, was ostracised only fourteen years later. Demosthenes offended his fellow countrymen by his fame and eloquence, so that they refused him the crown of gold which Ctesiphon proposed to bestow upon him in recognition of his Philippics, and his ever vigilant patriotism.

To-day, ostracism no longer exists; but human sentiment is unchanged, and moves men to the same injustice. In view of all these motives and influences, what has just occurred in Greece can be easily understood. It proves once again, that self-interest, envy, and mysticism control the acts of men; and that the Tarpeian Rock still stands close to the Capitoline.

[*Kölnische Zeitung* (Conservative Daily British Occupied Territory), *January 14, 15*]

ECHOES OF ANCIENT DISCORD

BY DR. FRANZ FISCHER

[The litigation to prevent the publication of the third volume of Bismarck's *Thoughts and Memories* has naturally revived interest in the circumstances attending his retirement. *Kölnische Zeitung* prints the following hitherto unpublished confidential letters from its editorial archives, written by its Berlin correspondent while the discord between Kaiser and Chancellor was at its height.]

BERLIN, *April* 18, 1889.

BISMARCK reads our paper with great attention from beginning to end, even the supplement story. The latter (*Durch Stürme*) irritates him exceedingly. He insists it is socialist through and through; that it incites the poor and oppressed against the rich and ruling classes; that the characters are unmitigated scoundrels whose whole object is represented to be the oppression of the poor. He insists that there are no starving school-teachers in real life. R. tells me that he has to listen to an outburst from the Prince on this subject every morning, as though R. himself were the author. I told him to tell the Prince the story is by a well-known novelist, who is anything but a socialist; and that it will end all right; and if the Prince will wait patiently, he will discover that in due time the good are rewarded, and the evil punished. Workingmen will not be incited to discontent by this romance, for they do not read the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

contains a good lesson for manufacturers and landlords who treat their workmen badly.

BEATENBERG, *August* 22, 1889.

Our editorial attack on the article on Colonial Policy, which the Prince wrote for the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, has offended Bismarck so deeply that he has ordered all relations with our paper broken off. He will have nothing more to do with us. He lays special stress on the point that he does not object to our opposing his policy, but to the tone of our opposition. We seem to be ranking ourselves with his personal enemies. Our tone is calculated to wound him personally. He has more profitable things to do than to irritate himself over such matters, and therefore the *Kölnische Zeitung*, which he has previously read through daily, is no longer to be delivered to him. I personally think the Prince is particularly angered because the *Kölnische Zeitung* has again recurred to our unfortunate toadying to Russia, and because it charges that we are also toadying to England.*

BERLIN, *January* 25, 1890.

Differences of opinion have arisen between the Prince and the Kaiser, due ultimately to Bismarck's inability to accommodate himself to the new era, represented by a Kaiser who really rules. I feel these differences may be speedily reconciled. They may be summarized thus: the Kaiser, who is too friendly to the working people to suit the Prince, has not been able to get his liberal views incorporated in the speech from the throne. He wants a workingman's welfare law; the Prince does not. The Kaiser wishes to repeal the law against the Socialists once for all; the Prince will not give up the right to banish Socialists. The Kaiser wants to get rid of Maybach; the Prince wants to keep him.— We shall know more regarding all this in a few days. But it is impossible to prevent a knowledge of these differences from reaching the Stock Exchange. I believe, as I have said, that the Chancellor has no intention of resigning. He just told his son Herbert, whom the Kaiser sent to get a measure passed to raise official salaries, that he could not leave the Kaiser over a mere difference of opinion. The Kaiser, on his side, does not want to alienate the Prince. He knows that even his voluntary retirement would weaken the popularity of the throne. He understands also how to handle the Prince, and present prospects are that things will go better in the future. The worst feature is that the Prince's Ministers also have lost their freedom of action. The Prince has recently been so arbitrary and unpredictable, that the ministers are completely put out. Yet we may hope that an improvement will occur here also.

BERLIN, *February* 21, 1890.

Last night, I had a long interview with Prince Radolin and Count Philip Eulenburg, both of whom are intimate with the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck, and Count August Eulenburg. To-day, I had a conversation with Count Bill Bismarck. All these gentlemen feel sure a break will occur between the Prince and the Kaiser before long; for things cannot continue as at present more than a few months. The Kaiser will do all in his power to delay the Prince's resignation. He is very much in earnest but very calm. . . . On the whole, sentiment in favor of workingmen's committees is growing stronger —even among Westphalian employers. Only, they will have no compulsion.

* Bismarck insisted that England's friendship was more important to Germany than any possible gain from supporting Emil Pasha's expedition to the Upper Nile.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BERLIN, *March* 1, 1890.

The State Council has unanimously agreed to prohibit Sunday labor except in special cases. It also almost unanimously approved the proposals regarding the employment of women and children. At the second session the project for workers' committees was adopted. Their obligatory introduction was not proposed or favored — that is to be left to the discretion of the parties, but they were almost unanimously recommended. The workers' committees, which have proved such a success for thirty years at Neviges, have aroused particular interest. Perhaps you could get a good article upon them. A pleasant sensation was created by a telegram received by the Kaiser during the session, announcing the introduction of workers' committees in the Saar district. At the third session, methods for making the government mines and factories model establishments, in respect to labor conditions, were discussed. The first measure debated was one for giving all the employees, in the course of time, the status of ordinary civil servants, like the workingmen now employed by the post office and railways. One of the reactionary speakers, Jeucke, gave the Kaiser to understand that his interference during the May labor disturbances had done harm. It would have been better had there been an open revolt. The Kaiser at once rose up and replied very calmly, that Jeucke's opinion was entirely new to him. Hitherto, his information has been precisely to the opposite effect. But even if there were some basis for Privy Counselor Jeucke's statements, yet he must say that to-day, after thinking the matter over more calmly and clearly than he had been able to do at the time, he would again act, as head of the State, precisely as he had acted on that occasion. Everyone knew what he said at the time. He would be neglecting his duty as head of the State if he had remained passive and had not attempted to reconcile the parties so long as reconciliation was possible. When the Kaiser had concluded this sharp, direct, but fluent reply, all the members present rose and thanked him.

His concluding remarks were a sharp reproof to the Social Democrats. It was his duty to combat them; he had the means to do so whenever necessary. But the first thing was to satisfy the just demands of the workers, and that was why he had convened the State Council. Since the subject of workers' committees had been so thoroughly discussed, he considered it no longer necessary to keep the whole council in session. When Jeucke, in his speech opposing workers' committees, insisted that they were inadvisable because they were likely to impair discipline, he expatiated upon the point that a workingman was the employer's legal equal only before he entered his employ, because as soon as he contracted to work for the latter he became his servant, and must be subject to strict and almost military discipline in the interest of production — whereupon the Kaiser raised both arms in the air to express his astonishment. After the regular speakers had finished, the Kaiser requested General von Loe to say a few words upon this question of discipline. Loe is a splendid talker, and made a brilliant speech attacking Jeucke's argument. Military discipline and labor discipline were entirely different things. In case of the first, complete subordination to one's superior officers was vital, but the authority of the latter was carefully kept within specific bounds. Appeal might be made directly to the Emperor himself, against unjust punishments. The existence of that right of appeal was the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

best guaranty that unjust and arbitrary punishments would not be inflicted. The very possibility made superior officers cautious to keep well within their rights. In factories, on the other hand, the laborers are subject to a single master, the employer. They have no protection against injustice. To install committees of the kind suggested could have no other result than to promote a good understanding between workers and employers.

After the Kaiser had adjourned the session, Prince Pless was appealed to by many of the members to thank him for sharing directly the labors of the Council, something which had never happened before in the country's history. As soon as the Kaiser saw what was in the air, he requested that this formality be omitted. He was only performing his duty. One of the labor experts introduced himself to the Kaiser at breakfast as a Social Democrat. The Kaiser delivered a lecture to him upon his Social Democratic ideas, which lasted almost a quarter of an hour. It ended only when the Kaiser's attention was diverted elsewhere.

Prince Bismarck attended only the first morning session, which lasted from ten o'clock to one, and the breakfast which followed. After that he kept away from the meetings. After the first breakfast, as he was lighting his great pipe, which Mrs. von Boetticher had handed him, he apologized for his probable absence in the future on the ground of other pressing duties. He then talked with Mrs. von Boetticher for an hour, and later went down the long corridor of the Interior Office and the Foreign Office to his house, stopping on his way at the offices of five different officials, where he called unannounced, and at each place spent a quarter or half an hour, gossiping. He repeatedly showed his displeasure at the Kaiser's actions.

Of course this is merely the rumbling before the storm. Yet, day before yesterday, the Kaiser went out of his way to tell two different gentlemen that he felt certain they would weather the crisis.

BERLIN, *March* 11, 1890.

The Kaiser has conferred the order of the Black Eagle upon Minister von Boetticher of his own initiative, without consulting Bismarck. He only informed the latter later. The Prince is badly put out about this, as he considers it a studied offense. He hardly congratulated the Minister when he presented himself, and does not try to conceal his indignation. Those who are best informed believe he has made up his mind not to resign his office, but to hang on to grim death.

BERLIN, *March* 16, 1890.

This morning, Count Herbert wrote me that his father desired to see me about eleven o'clock. I immediately went to the Chancellor's palace and had a half hour's interview with him. Wine was being served, and he asked me to drink a glass with him. I begged him to excuse me, saying that I indulged sometimes in the evening, but had to be careful in the morning to keep in good trim. He replied that his case was different. He had to have a half flask of wine every morning to oil the wheels. Then he started out at once about the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* article. He regretted that it had been misinterpreted by the National Liberals and the *Kölnische Zeitung*. He was not contemplating allying himself with the Centre. He would consider such a policy impracticable and could not understand how any one came to attribute such folly to him. His article was directed against the Progressive Party, and was intended to call the Kaiser's attention to the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dangers he incurred by joining forces with the Progressives. The Kaiser was rapidly falling into the Progressive procession. The Dowager Empress, who ordinarily never remained in Berlin through the winter, as she hated that season here, was obviously staying for the purpose of bringing the Progressives and the Kaiser together. She was playing her game better than in Kaiser Friedrich's days. She had got the Kaiser to believe that the Progressives would endorse a moderate military budget. That had won the Kaiser. It was much to be regretted; for this meant surrendering the whole Scharnhorst idea of a 'nation in arms.' France had already taken measures which would give it in a few years, certainly within twelve years, seven hundred and fifty thousand more trained soldiers than Germany would have, although the population of France was so much smaller.

Germany would in all probability have to fight its next war against two fronts. It must feel assured of clear military superiority over either government singly. There was no immediate danger of war. However, as he had pointed out in his speech to the Reichstag, almost every three years since 1830 had brought Germany to the verge of war. The country must, therefore, carry permanent military insurance against a standing peril. Now it was proposed to sacrifice this policy in order to win over the Progressives. Several ladies mentioned were very chummy with the Empress Friedrich. They were always running in and out there. They were also well acquainted with many gentlemen of the imperial household. The whole Eulenburg clique were his — Bismarck's — enemies. . . . The Kaiser could not make up his mind to settle with these gentlemen. He fancied he could give them a free rein and then bring them up sharply when the time came. But he was mistaken. And the article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was to call this fact to his attention. The Kaiser would not consent to coöperation with the Centre Party. His mind was settled on this point, at least. However, the Prince had to look over the field of battle before the Reichstag opened, and had received Windthorst (the Centre leader) for that reason. His doorkeeper had been instructed that he was accessible at any time to ambassadors and to members of the Reichstag. . . As president of the ministry he could not chase around after delegates at their private houses. Windthorst had recently spent two hours with him, and they had a very interesting conversation. Windthorst had given the Prince a cue to his plans, and the conversation had made it perfectly clear that coöperation between them was impossible. He did not want any further misunderstanding to arise during the few weeks he would remain in office. He was entirely pre-occupied with what would occur after his resignation, which might come in a few days, and could not be delayed longer than May.

It had been very hard for him to make the decision to resign. It meant a complete revolution in his manner of living at his advanced age. He had been accustomed to running the government for thirty years. Now, he must suddenly retire to the country and become a farmer again. However, he could no longer work with the Kaiser, in view of the way the latter managed public business. He could not continue to assume responsibility for what might occur. The Kaiser was constantly dealing with ministers, calling on them for advice, and giving them personal orders, without consulting him — their chief — and without his knowledge. In this way he was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

losing general oversight of public affairs. The Kaiser was exceedingly gracious to him personally; but they were completely at variance in their policies. Sometimes his own ministers left him in the lurch. He considered the Kaiser's labor policy very perilous. He had used every effort in his power to dissuade the Kaiser from it, but he had been able to see, at the last session of the cabinet, that the other ministers did not share his views, and preferred that he alone should 'bell the cat.' Minister von Boetticher did n't know how to steer a middle course. He had nine children, and had lost his own property and that of his wife. He was accustomed to a liberal scale of living, and, consequently, was frightened out of his boots whenever the Kaiser scowled. A cabinet order, way back in 1852, directed that every minister, before submitting any weighty matter to the King, should first inform the head of the cabinet. Such a procedure was the only rational one and had been continued without question. Now, he had to appeal to this old rule in order to secure the necessary unity in the administration. But the Kaiser desired to be an absolute monarch. Therefore, the Prince could not coöperate with him longer. He had associated intimately with the Kaiser when the latter was still a prince. He had always defended him against his own father, and had even been rudely reproved by the latter because he had assisted Wilhelm in some of his early financial difficulties. Now, however, he felt he had lost the Kaiser's confidence and must retire. He had the feeling of a man in a wagon where the horses were running away and could not be checked. The only thing for him to do was to jump out of the wagon.

This ended our interview. I told the Prince I hoped he would reconsider his determination, but he insisted that it was final, and invited me to visit him some time at Friedrichsruh. The Prince seemed in excellent health; he moved about vigorously and with an elastic step. His complexion was ruddy, even florid. He spoke fluently and without hesitancy. He rubbed his face only once, although at our last interview it had pained him so, that he continually massaged it. He was also very calm, while during the previous interview he made no effort to conceal his indignation.

Recurring to some of the details of our conversation, I fear that Bismarck's anger has betrayed him into statements and inferences which are erroneous. I am able to assure you from an unquestionable source that the following facts are true. I could not reveal them to the Prince, because I am not authorized to make them public.

1. The Empress Friedrich is pursuing the opposite rôle to the one attributed her by Bismarck. She has recently written a letter eight pages long to a gentleman I might name, in which she argues at length that the Kaiser has taken a false path in his recent decrees. The recipient mentioned this fact to the Kaiser recently, saying he assumed the letter was written for the Kaiser's eye, but it contained so little that was new that he thought it was unnecessary to transmit it to him.

2. It was not the Empress Friedrich, but the Baden Ambassador, the Grand Duke of Baden, and Mr. von Helldorff, who informed the Kaiser that they believed the Progressives would vote for a moderate military budget, since they were as interested as the Kaiser himself in forestalling any conflict between the Kaiser and the Reichstag.

3. Yesterday morning at nine thirty the Kaiser had a very serious talk with the Chancellor at the villa of Count

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Herbert. The Kaiser bitterly reproached the Prince for having received Windthorst against the royal wishes, and for not mentioning the visit afterward. The Kaiser had been besought from various sides to give Windthorst an audience, but had vigorously refused. He considered the man unpatriotic and dishonorable. He wanted the Prince to adopt the same attitude hereafter. The Kaiser then commanded that the cabinet order of 1852, which I have already mentioned, be abrogated. He intended to deal directly with his ministers and not to receive their opinions through a third person, who often failed to give them in full. Last of all, the Kaiser repeated several times that we would have no controversy with the Reichstag. In order to avoid one, he would reduce the military budget to the utmost.

4. Regarding the latter measure, the Prince made provision last November to keep expenditures within as moderate limits as possible. Now he wants to enlarge them every conceivable way. He wrote only the other day to the Minister of War, that the present army plan did not seem to him comprehensive enough. He wanted it developed more fully. The Kaiser would not yield on this point. He has directed General Vogel von Falkenstein to get in touch with the different parties in the Reichstag, in order to ascertain how liberal an appropriation the Reichstag is willing to approve. He intends that the military budget shall come within those limits.

5. The present Empress has very recently complained of her inability to get along peaceably with the Dowager Empress. Both the Kaiser and his wife want to live on good terms with her, but she has repulsed their overtures. Almost every invitation to tea, or similar courtesy is refused by the Empress Friedrich and her daughters.

BERLIN, *March* 17, 1890.

Count Herbert informed me before the cabinet meeting began that it would be his father's last. I sought further details and discovered that Prince Bismarck has really decided to resign to-day and to inform the Kaiser of his intentions. I, personally, believe that the scene which occurred yesterday between the Kaiser and the Chancellor over Windthorst's visit to the latter, and over the cabinet order of 1852 has finally brought things to a crisis. It is a great misfortune which has befallen our Fatherland. The catastrophe will clarify things at home, because we have had two horses pulling in opposite directions of late; but we have lost prestige abroad.

It is most fortunate, however, that our Kaiser has so far made an excellent impression abroad, that people regard him as a strong, energetic, enterprising ruler, sincerely desiring peace. I have been promised definitely the first news of the official resignation. That will be an advantage of only a few minutes or an hour. I am so excited that I cannot discuss the matter at length to-day. I beg you to have a very cordial article ready, recognizing the distinguished services of the Prince, but simultaneously expressing confidence that the Kaiser will prove equal to the serious situation. The Kaiser has seized the reins of the government with great energy and zeal. He is endeavoring to convince the world that he will be an industrious ruler devoted to the cause of peace, a man desirous of remedying social ills so far as a powerful government can do this, but resolute in suppressing with a strong hand the extravagances of the Social Democrats. Bismarck has already asserted that the Kaiser will be his own Chancellor. Let us hope that he will be the best possible one. I have begged Eulenburg to advise the Kaiser to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

write the Prince an especially cordial farewell letter.

BERLIN, *March* 30, 1890.

I went to pay my farewell respects to Bismarck before he left his official residence, whereupon he repeated his former invitation to visit him soon at Friedrichsruh. Schwenniger then put me in his carriage, so that I could observe the tremendous ovation given Bismarck on his way to the station. The crowd at the station itself was so dense that we could not get near, so I came back home.

BERLIN, *April* 20, 1890.

. . . After Caprivi and I had discussed the next session of the Reichstag, which we were agreed in thinking would be a very successful and orderly one, I turned the conversation to the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck. I did not disguise the fact that the Prince's dismissal had made the Kaiser very unpopular in Western and Southern Germany, and in North Germany around Hamburg, and that possibly we might have serious trouble. The young Kaiser is full of new ideas and too impatient; he cannot wait for his plans to ripen and mature; he is constantly doing half-baked things to the injury of the country. I also mentioned that the Kaiser was tactless in public, and did not understand how to address a friendly word to everyone. Even in great receptions, he would get into intimate conversation with some friend, and leave the rest of the people unnoticed; that he had a habit of arriving late, and the like.

Caprivi thanked me for my frankness, agreed with me fully, and said that he had often deliberated as to how such things might be remedied. The Kaiser was a very friendly sort of man at heart. Indeed, he was extremely desirous of being kind; but he was not a good mixer, and was much embarrassed when among strangers, especially ladies. One day, he asked the Kaiser to address a few kind words to an old general of high merits who had just been retired. The Kaiser welcomed the opportunity, but the general was a stranger to him. During the dinner, the Kaiser drank his health several times; but after the meal was over, he did not speak another word. The Kaiser was personally keenly aware of this failing, especially since he had the example of his grandfather to warn him. He was trying in every way possible to acquire an easy manner. He had recently mentioned with delight that at a reception a few days before, he had actually spoken to nearly one hundred different ladies; but it took a long time to cure him completely of his diffidence. On the other hand, he had a very attractive glance, like that of the Empress Friedrich, which won all who came within its influence.

The Kaiser's education had been very faulty. He, Caprivi, felt free to say that he considered the gymnasium course a great mistake. Although the two princes nominally occupied the same status as the other students, and were treated like them, they had been only too well aware of their vastly higher rank. This sense of superiority would not have been cultivated if they had been brought up with a few intimate playmates in the good old way. The results of this manifested themselves especially in intercourse with third parties. But the Kaiser was so talented, so much in earnest, so zealous to correct his own faults, that he hoped the effects of this bad start might be completely overcome. Caprivi did not believe there was reason to fear that the Kaiser would be over-hasty in trying to carry out his immature plans, and was most anxious to reassure me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on that point. So far as Wurtemberg was concerned, there were special reasons for the Kaiser's unpopularity there. It had been necessary to rid the army of a lot of out of date and superannuated officers. While the measures taken in Wurtemberg had not been as vigorous as those in Prussia, they had created much bad blood. . . . Caprivi said that as he became better informed of conditions in his office, he was more than ever convinced that it would have been impossible to keep on with the Prince. Bismarck had got into controversies not only with the Kaiser, but with the whole cabinet. Public business had suffered as a result. Things were getting out of hand, and a smash-up was inevitable. The longer it was postponed, the worse it would have been. If Bismarck now wanted to oppose the government, it was something to be borne as best it could. Caprivi did not think the Prince was very favorably disposed toward himself personally.

BERLIN, *May* 8, 1890.

Strange things are happening in regard to Bismarck. He has written to the Prince Regent of Braunschweig, and probably to other princes, saying that his dismissal was a puzzle to him; he had never had any differences of opinion worth mentioning with the Emperor; his last interview with the Emperor, had finished with them in perfect accord, but the very next day the Kaiser sent three gentlemen to him demanding his resignation; he wanted to have the intrigue which had so suddenly changed the Kaiser's attitude cleared up. He has also written a letter to Sir Charles Dilke, saying that he did not resign of his own free will, but was kicked out. People fear that Dilke will misuse this letter.

[*Le Correspondant* (Liberal Catholic Bi-Monthly), *January 10*]

JAPAN AND THE FUTURE OF THE ORIENT. I

[Both the British and the Continental press is much exercised over the relations between the United States and Japan. The following article is typical of this discussion. It appears in a magazine of high standing, and though anonymous, contains internal evidence of having been written by a Frenchman intimately familiar with the Far East and its problems.]

ENGLAND and Japan signed their first treaty of alliance in 1902 for the period of five years. At that time, Russia was steadily moving eastward, was threatening Korea, and was advancing toward central Asia to the grave concern of the British Cabinet. The purpose of the alliance was to preserve both peace and the *status quo* in the Far East, in accordance with the double formula of 'the open door' in China and Korea and the guaranteed independence and integrity of those two countries. This agreement recognized Japan's special interests in Korea and Great Britain's special interests in China. It stipulated that in case either of the two parties was involved in a war in defense of its interests the other would remain strictly neutral, but would intervene in case a third power attacked its ally.

At the time it was made, the alliance was considered an extraordinary success for English diplomacy. In reality, it was a shrewd move by the statesmen of Japan. Count Hayashi, who was during his public career Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister at Peking and St. Petersburg, and Minister and Ambassador at London, has left an extremely interesting account of the negotiations which resulted in this alliance. He relates how he stimulated Downing Street by threatening an alliance with Russia. In order to prevent Lord Lansdowne

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from considering this threat a mere bluff, Japan actually sent Marquis Ito to St. Petersburg to start negotiations with Count Lamsdorff for a new treaty between Russia and Japan. To provide against the possibility that even this might not impress British diplomats as sufficiently serious, Kurino was sent to Paris to suggest a triple alliance of Japan, France, and Russia.

Let us recall in this connection, that Germany was the first to propose a triple alliance to embrace itself and England and Japan. London was at this time very hostile to St. Petersburg, and the colonial ambitions of France had aroused Great Britain's jealousy. Japan sought this alliance, as Hayashi ingenuously admits, primarily in order to have a free hand in fighting Russia. Its victory would give it Korea and whatever else it could extort from Russia and China in Manchuria; England would obtain securities for its Indian frontiers and checkmate the policy of France, which was supplying Russia with enormous sums for military purposes. Japanese government was well informed as to the military situation in Russia and particularly as to the weakness of its navy, and feared but one possibility in case of war; that Europe might intervene, as it had after its war with China, to rob it of the fruits of victory. Its alliance with England was designed to 'keep the ring.'

On August 12, 1905, the treaty was renewed, but it was modified in several important details. First, the preamble expressly extended its field to cover China and all the Far East including India, a stipulation that the British government had vainly tried to obtain from Japan at the time the first agreement was made. The peace of the Orient, the integrity of China, and the maintenance of the open door were reaffirmed in a befittingly solemn manner; but the real object of the alliance was indicated by this phrase: 'To maintain the territorial rights of the high contracting parties in Eastern Asia and India, and to defend their special interests in those regions.' The independence of Korea was brusquely cast aside; in fact, Article III conceded Japan a free hand in that country. The renewed alliance differed from the first one also in obligating each party to come to the aid of the other, even though but a single power attacked its interests in the Orient or India.

Great Britain's motives had changed completely during the interval. Japan had succeeded Russia as the dominant power in the Far East. Russia had been defeated; but meantime the growth of Germany's navy was beginning to give the British government serious concern, while the Japanese army was manifesting a disquieting admiration of the German military system. As long as Japan was its ally, England was safe. If that country became estranged from Great Britain, it might unite with Germany to become a formidable menace. The new treaty assured England of Japan's friendship, relieved it of any fear in respect to India, and enabled it to concentrate its navy at home, leaving only a weak squadron in Eastern waters. On the other hand, the agreement added immensely to Japan's international prestige, strengthened it in Asia, and guaranteed it the peace necessary to recover from the exhaustion of its war with Russia.

The 1905 agreement was to continue in effect ten years, but in 1911 a new treaty of alliance was substituted for it. The latter was to continue ten years, and to extend automatically beyond that period if it was not de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nounced twelve months before its expiration. Great changes had occurred during the three years preceding. Japan and Russia had come to an understanding regarding Manchuria. China had awakened from its torpor and was not at the moment a melon waiting to be cut. On the other hand, Japan had annexed Korea in 1910, while England had made a bargain with Russia regarding Persia and Afghanistan, which relieved it of worry concerning its Indian frontiers. Last of all, hostility between Japan and the United States was growing, fostered by immigration disputes and commercial rivalry in China. Japanese immigration was also a sore point with the British dominions, who would have none of it. This difficulty was fortunately bridged over, thanks to Japan, which, without renouncing its claims in principle, declared its voluntary intention of checking emigration to Canada. So the renewal of the alliance could be discussed at the Imperial Conference in 1911, which approved it, though Australia abstained from voting.

The treaty of 1911 differed from that of 1905 in one important respect. Article IV read: 'In case either of the high contracting parties concludes a treaty of general arbitration with a third power, it is agreed that nothing in this alliance shall compel that high contracting party to make war upon a government with whom it has such a treaty of arbitration.' Great Britain caused the insertion of this clause, in order to assure the United States that it would, under no condition, engage in war with that country in alliance with Japan. Since it had concluded a treaty of arbitration with the United States, its neutrality was thus guaranteed in case war should occur between those two powers. In reality, however, that clause never had any force; because the American Senate rejected the treaty of arbitration in March 1912.

Great Britain profited immensely from the alliance of 1911. During the recent war, it was relieved of any concern regarding its Eastern possessions. Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies; but it also acquired the right to sit in the Peace Conference as one of the Five Great Powers. Japan tried to take unfair advantage of this situation in 1915, by presenting to China the famous Twenty-One Demands, which amounted to nothing less than assuming complete political, military, and economic control of the country. The intervention of the United States caused the most arbitrary and radical of these demands to be withdrawn, but the effect on public opinion in America was most unfortunate. This did not prevent Japan from continuing the same policy. In 1916, using as a pretext a petty quarrel in Manchuria, where Japanese soldiers had no business because it was a point outside their zone of occupation, the Japanese minister presented eight demands which we have not space to analyze here but which are characteristic.

During the war, the British government had endorsed Japan's claims to Shantung. On the eighth of March 1917, France subscribed to this guaranty, subject to the condition that Japan persuaded China to ally itself with the Entente and break off diplomatic relations with Germany. Italy likewise supported Japan's claim.

Never in diplomatic history has their appeared a series of official documents more distressing than the agreements made by the Great Powers in 1917 relative to Shantung. The Allies in Europe wanted China's aid. China was already willing to join

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them. It had offered to do so in 1914 and 1915, but Japan had opposed that action. In order to get China, already only too willing to do so, to join these belligerent powers, the Allies purchased Japan's consent by promising it Shantung and half of the Pacific islands. In order to secure permission for China to do something which it already wanted to do, the Allies gave Japan an entire province of that country.

So China became an Ally. During the Peace Conference, the leading journals of the United States never ceased to refer to this incident with indignation. The attitude of the Great Powers at the Conference regarding Shantung did much to awaken America's discontent with its proceedings, and the weakness of Mr. Wilson's protests were far from strengening his prestige with his fellow-citizens. China refused at Paris to sanction the transfer of the lease of Kiaochow and the other economic concessions involved in it, or to recognize the validity of the treaty of 1915.

This attitude added to the vigorous awakening of public sentiment in America, induced Japan to try direct negotiations. If it had succeeded, China would have tacitly recognized Japan's right as the successor of Germany, would have acquiesced in the Shantung clauses of the Versailles Treaty, which it had refused to sign, and above all would have endorsed the treaty of 1915. Periodically, Japan announces that Kiaochow is to be returned to China. The Chinese government quite reasonably, in view of its previous experience, regards these promises as a mask to conceal new demands—such for instance as a renewal of the military agreement between China and Japan. The latter country bases all its proposals upon the treaty of 1915 between the two governments. The Chinese protest that that treaty was signed under duress, and appeal to universally recognized principles of international law, 'that the validity of a treaty presupposes that the signatory parties are in a position to sign it as their own free act.' Furthermore, the treaty has never been ratified by the Chinese parliament which, under the terms of the constitution, must so ratify any treaty before it acquires force.

What we call Japanese imperialism is not a new thing. It existed long before that nation's wars with China and with Russia. It even antedates the restoration of the Mikado. Foreign conquests were one of the aims which animated the daimios who overthrew the shogunate. As early as 1854, they already were planning to occupy the South Sea islands, which Japan finally acquired in 1914. Korea had been coveted still longer. The Japanese planned to establish a protectorate over China. In the second year of the late war, the London *Morning Post* correspondent in Japan wrote: 'This country is convinced that its future depends upon controlling China. It believes that it either must direct China's foreign policy or lose the position it now occupies in the Orient. The present moment seems most opportune for settling this matter with China itself. Japanese newspapers say another such chance may not offer itself for one hundred years.'

Japan believes that it ought to be China's guardian. Its statesmen, press, and common people are as one in the feeling that this is their national mission. Count Hayashi has stated it frankly in his articles in *Jiji*. Count Okuma, formerly Premier, has endorsed this opinion from the ministerial bench. The present Prime Minister,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hara, has expressed the same idea. Every class of the people which takes an interest in foreign affairs holds this view. Business men and financiers naturally support it.

The late Prince Ito, in the instructions which he left for his son Baron Ito, expressed himself as follows on the subject: 'Whether or not a constitutional government succeed in China, whether China preserve its unity or be divided, the voice of Japan should be heard and respected in regard to anything affecting China. No nation will dispute that. But it is Japan's duty to protect not only China but every Oriental nation, including Korea and Manchuria. Control of the Sea of Japan, of the China Sea, and of the Pacific Ocean is vitally essential for our safety.'

The treaty of Portsmouth, which concluded the war with Russia, was far from satisfying Japan. That country was denied an indemnity, but it had to make the best of a bad bargain on account of its own financial and military embarrassments. However, in engaging 'to respect the independence and integrity of Korea,' the government intended from the first to interpret this promise with the same latitude with which European nations have interpreted similar solemn engagements; and it took the first convenient occasion to annex Korea. It secured in addition very important concessions in Manchuria, which gave it a pretext and opportunity to interfere in China's domestic affairs. The country's special interests in the Orient were recognized, and it was promoted to the rank of a great power.

Count Hayashi, who had resigned as Ambassador to London to become Minister of Foreign Affairs, had long been aware that a too frank exhibition of Japan's intentions with regard to China might alarm the great Western Powers, who regarded that country as a melon to be divided among themselves. Profiting skilfully by their mutual jealousies and suspicions, this Minister succeeded in concluding a series of separate treaties and conventions with those Powers, which recognized Japan's privileged position in the Orient, and dealt with strictly Chinese questions without consulting the government of that country. Naturally, all these diplomatic contracts contained the same provisions as the treaty of alliance with Great Britain, guaranteeing the integrity and independence of China and the policy of the open door. In practice, the open door merely meant, that any country powerful enough should take everything it could away from China, and if possible should always take more than any of its rivals.

Japanese were deeply implicated in the Chinese revolution. While many Chinese members of the so-called 'Japanese party' were inspired by motives the reverse of honorable, others of equal influence were moved to favor Japan by loyal and patriotic considerations. Realizing that the Western Powers were planning to partition China, which has had little reason to trust Europe ever since the Opium War; they persuaded themselves that Japanese protection would serve the best interests of their country, and that they would be safer dealing with people of their own race, with whom they had had relations for centuries, than with the Whites. The result is, that although a vast majority of thinking Chinamen, particularly in the North, are absolutely hostile to Japan's pretensions, there is a fairly strong Japanese party in the South. Meantime, no party in China is especially friendly toward any particular European power. There

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is a powerful movement in favor of 'China for the Chinese' and of 'Asia for the Asiatics.' There is a party which preaches the White Peril. But there is no party in China in favor of partitioning the country into spheres of European influence.

RUMORS FROM THE SENTRY LINE

[Europe is asking solicitously whether Spring is to bring peace or war upon its eastern border. A Moscow correspondent of the Berlin *Rote Fahne* (January 7), the official organ of the United Communist Party of Germany, is noncommittal; while the Dantzic correspondent of the conservative *Kölnische Zeitung* (January 9) predicts hostilities. We publish these articles in the order of their dates. Meantime the Eighth Pan Russian Congress, according to a Moscow wireless of January 5, has ordered the partial demobilization of the Red army.]

I

RUSSIA'S relations to other countries are just now determined by the failure of all attempts to crush its government by force. The efforts of the Entente to promote a counter-revolution failed for two reasons; they followed no unified plan, and they encountered the united resistance of the Russian nation. The Entente could not pursue a unified campaign against Russia, because France insisted on backing Wrangel and Poland, while Lloyd George was negotiating with our government. Although the Entente tried to mobilize the border states against Russia, it dare not recognize the independence of those states for fear of offending the counter-revolutionist forces in Russia proper. Despite their efforts to disguise themselves as democrats, the leaders of the counter-revolution were not able to win over the peasants. Country people and townspeople, alike in Russia, have always considered the White Guard the ghost of former Russian capitalism and Junkerism. H. G. Wells says truly: 'The common people have always voted for soviet Russia on the battlefield.'

After defeating the Whites, soviet Russia concluded peace with Finland, Lettland, Esthonia, and Lithuania. It now looks as though peace might be possible on the entire western front. Moscow is treating with Poland with good prospects of a satisfactory settlement. Poland's success last September was a Pyrrhic victory. By speedily crushing Wrangel, all soviet Russia's forces are freed to fight Poland. We can now concentrate all our troops against Poland alone. Pilsudski's earlier hope of extorting an unfair treaty from us has vanished. Poland must give up its plan of forcing intolerable economic terms upon Russia; or else it must decide to fight a hopeless war. It will hardly take the second course, because its September victory was purchased at the cost of its own economic ruin. The country's finances and business are in a hopeless state. It cannot support another war. Concessions to France cannot help it; for the latter country itself is too hard pressed financially to risk new adventures. Furthermore, the French government seems indisposed to assume binding obligations toward Poland. Its official organ in Warsaw, the *Journal de Pologne*, asks what guaranties Poland can give that it will follow French policy in return for military aid from France. This paper cites not only the negotiations at Riga, but also the business necessity which compels Poland to make its purchases in Germany instead of France; for no other course is possible so long as Polish money is so depreciated. However that may be, soviet Russia seeks peace with Poland, and rumors that we are preparing for a new war are false.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet Russia will not attack Poland, unless the little clique of nationalist desperadoes at Warsaw refuses a tolerable peace, and proves a mere tool of the Paris imperialist adventurers.

So far as Roumania is concerned, Russia's rulers have been trying for over a year to persuade the Boyar masters of that country to make a treaty with it. So far, Roumania has courteously evaded getting down to business. Whenever we arranged a meeting, the Roumanian peace delegates always missed the train. Let us hope, however, that since our Red army now has no other work on its hands, and heavy detachments have gone into winter quarters in the Ukraine, the Roumanians will be more disposed to peace.

On its southern and eastern fronts, soviet Russia holds a strong defensive line. It has established a connection with the Kemalists via soviet Armenia, and is now in a position to influence the policy of the Turkish nationalists more powerfully than ever. It can aid them against the Entente with war materials, and should they go over to the Entente, it can prevent their efforts to reach Baku. Georgia depends absolutely upon our friendship. It is to be hoped that country will pause a long time before permitting Batum to be used as a base of operations against soviet Russia. Were England to occupy Batum against Georgia's wishes, Russia and Georgia would at once unite to fight England. Moscow is in communication with the Persian government at Teheran, and the Persian people are being taught who are their true protectors against England's imperialist designs.

The soviet government's position in Central Asia has been immensely strengthened by its policy in Turkestan, and by the establishment of a Bolshevist government in Bokhara. Afghanistan, which the British authorities in India sought to make a bastion against Turkestan, appreciates the peril this represents for itself. The struggle between Russian and English influence at Kabul has not yet ended.

In Siberia, the so-called 'Far East Republic' forms a buffer state between soviet Russia and Japan. One of our vigorous comrades, Krasnostschokof, has prevented the Japanese from penetrating the interior. Japan's designs have received a further check in the agreement concluded between soviet Russia and a group of American capitalists.

All this does not solve soviet Russia's foreign problems, but it facilitates their solution. The Supreme Council of the allies nominally lifted the blockade after the defeat of Denikin and Kolchak, and immediately we started negotiations for a resumption of trade with England. These negotiations have been protracted for a year without a final settlement. The delay is due not only to the obstacles which France keeps putting in the way of peace with Russia, but likewise to the bitter fight in England itself between commercial interests and the military clique. The *New Statesman*, the organ of the Fabians, very rightly characterized the situation by saying: 'So long as there is still war inside the English Foreign Office, there cannot be peace with Russia.' The English government is trying to barter a resumption of trade with Russia against our agreement to stop revolutionary agitation in Eastern Asia, without giving us any assurance that our commerce will not be paralyzed by seizing our Russian gold. It is clear that no arrangement can be made on such a one-sided basis.

Should the negotiations between

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London and Moscow be broken off, we must face the prospect that the Entente will try some new scheme of intervention. Mad as such plans are, they still hover in the fevered imagination of Churchill and French sabre rattlers. Since every local attack on soviet Russia has failed, the only possibility would be to unite all Russia's neighbors in a general attack upon us. That would at once raise the question of Germany's joining the anti-Bolshevist forces. The German government, whose Russian policy follows the devious policy of England like a shadow, is naturally awake to every possibility. Although General Hoffman, of Brest-Litovsk fame, committed an egregious blunder in proposing that Germany head a crusade against soviet Russia, a fraction of the German cabinet unquestionably is working on such a scheme. The campaign of abuse against soviet Russia, which has suddenly revived in the German conservative press, is intended to provoke Moscow to retaliation, and thus to sever the weak bond which now unites the two countries.

Soviet Russia watches with attentive composure the conflicting and mutually antagonistic capitalist cliques of western Europe, disputing how best to extinguish the firebrand of revolution our country represents. To make peace with the capitalist powers or to resume trade with them involves perils for the Bolsheviki, against which they are trying to strengthen themselves by economic reorganizations at home. The war threat finds Moscow prepared, and relying not only on its own strength but upon the disunity of its opponents, who, being inspired by selfish greed, do not trust each other. Last of all, we confide in the loyal sympathy of the proletariat abroad, which is growing stronger with every day that passes. Thus soviet Russia faces its fourth year of battle, from which it confidently hopes again to emerge victorious.

II

LENIN emphasized repeatedly during the late Pan-Russian Congress, that soviet Russia's wars were definitely ended with the signing of the 'not unfavorable' Riga preliminary peace with Poland, and the utter defeat of Wrangel. He asserted that the soviet government had no thought of further military aggression, but desired to devote all its energies to the peaceful reconstruction of Russia's ruined industries. However, his professions were received by Russia's immediate neighbors with a skeptical smile, because incontrovertible facts were talking a very different tongue. Occasional reports of troop movements in the Bolshevist press, information given by Russian fugitives, and the statements of returning war prisoners, piece together like the parts of a mosaic, to form a fairly complete and consistent picture, which reveals with intimidating clearness the careful preparations the Bolshevist General Staff is making for a great campaign.

Authoritative reports from entirely independent sources indicate that the Russians are assembling two powerful army groups, each equipped to operate independently, which they have stationed on the two wings of their gigantic western front. They are pursuing the same strategy which was so successful last year against Poland, concentrating their principal strength at both ends of their line, and threatening their enemies with encirclement so as to force them to surrender their strongest defensive points almost without a struggle. The south army group is in the Ukraine. It consists mainly of the troops which were fighting Petljura last summer, reënforced by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the divisions employed against Wrangel. This army of offense is especially strong in artillery, having in its possession most of the heavy guns and field batteries captured in Crimea. Its object is threefold: to stamp out the still live embers of revolt in the Ukraine; to invade Bessarabia, and finally to encircle Polish Galicia. We do not know how far the soviet government is committed to an attack upon Roumania. It seems beyond question, however, that an attack on Poland had already been decided on, and that it will follow the same strategic plan as last year's offensive. Swinging well south from its base at Kieff, this army will march upon Lemberg, and if it succeeds in capturing that city will have an open road before it into Congress Poland.

The second powerful offensive group is stationed east of Lettland. Its extreme right wing is formed by the Eighth army, which is concentrated around Pleskau. South of it are other corps, part of which are still in process of organization. Their nucleus consists of the Seventh and the Fifteenth armies, whose staffs are provisionally at Vitebsk and Smolensk. The objective of these armies is Poland proper. They are expected to pour through the Polish corridor east of the Dvina, and first seize Vilna and Central Lithuania. The northern wing will protect the flank of the troops engaged in this operation, and by its mere presence prevent intervention by the Baltic states. The Bolshevist General Staff learned a lesson from its defeat last year. It will not disperse its forces, but settle first of all with its most dangerous opponent, Poland. Whether the Red armies propose to seize Lettland and Esthonia if they defeat Poland is something only time can tell. The attack upon the latter country will be conducted with the same speed as last year. Following closely down the East Prussia border, the Russians will strive constantly to outflank their opponents. This time, the Bolshevist leaders feel that they have organized their supply and support system well enough to insure provisions and munitions for their army, even though the country through which they pass is destitute of local supplies. Gomel, a very important railway centre, has been selected as their principal supply base.

These warlike preparations on Russia's part are perfectly understood in the capitals of the threatened border states, and precautionary measures are being taken. Esthonia and Lettland have a secret understanding as to how they will act in case of war. The Esthonian army has been partly demobilized. Even though the Peipus line is very easily defended, it cannot be held unless the Letts simultaneously station strong forces upon the continuation of that line as far as the Dvina. However, the Lett army is already strongly Bolshevist in sympathy, and its resisting power is very small. The only dependable troops that country has are the Courland Division, the nucleus of which is the Baltic National Guard. I have positive information that the Letts will not attempt to defend the Dvina front, but will leave it to the Poles to shoulder the principal burden there.

Poland has never been deceived for a moment as to the insincerity of the soviet government's peace professions. It has not curtailed its armament, and has demobilized only enough troops to appease popular discontent at home, and to comply with the Riga agreement, which could not be utterly disregarded. At the present time, military preparations on a grand scale are quietly going forward in order that the country may

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be prepared for any eventuality. First and foremost, the Polish government is endeavoring to organize certain battering rams along its eastern boundary to break the first onrush of the Red army. Feverish efforts are being made to revive the anti-Bolshevist agitation in the Ukraine. In spite of Balachovich's disaster, Warsaw is instigating an uprising in White Ruthenia. The 'Commissioners of the White Russian People's Republic' in three departments have summoned all men able to carry arms, between the ages of sixteen and fifty years, to fight the Bolsheviki; while the latter are dealing with these insurgents without mercy wherever they can lay hands on them. Last of all, Zeligowsky is strengthening his forces in Lithuania as rapidly as possible. Any reports to the contrary are designed expressly for the purpose of deceiving the Lithuanians as to what is really going on around Vilna, and also to avoid giving the Russians or the Lithuanians a pretext for attacking Poland. Simultaneously, Poland has sounded Paris as to the prospect of military aid. The recent decision of the League council to send Entente troops to Vilna looks like a concession to Poland, for if neutral forces are occupying Central Lithuania the Russians will hardly attempt to invade this district. Poland will thus obtain an invaluable protection for its left flank, and add to this the prospect that France will be able to send any amount of war materials and other supplies to Poland, under the guise of shipping them to the plebiscite area.

Meantime Roumania is taking precautions on the Bessarabia frontier. A chance news item, reporting the collision of two military trains on their way to the front at a point between Predeal and Hermannstadt, has attracted attention to the fact that the deployment of the Roumanian army has already begun. Furthermore, Roumania has asked Paris whether France, and possibly England likewise, would support it if attacked by soviet Russia, and has received an evasive but not a negative answer.

So we see Eastern Europe already working feverishly on dikes to check the flood of Bolshevism. There is no question but that the situation along this whole front is extremely critical. The soviet government has not a free hand in making its decisions. It has to bear in mind occasional revolts at home, and along its borders, and the provisioning of its army. In regard to the last, the food situation is so bad that Russia may be forced to take the offensive before the snow is off the ground. Such a military venture would be a desperate act on Russia's part, explainable only by irresistible domestic pressure. That country would be staking everything on a single card — on success at the first blow. Unless the enemy countries were overrun before the frost is out of the ground, the spring thaws would bog the whole campaign. If the soviet government postpones a little longer, then it is doubtful whether the war will start before April. During that interval, naturally, something may occur to prevent the anticipated offensive. In any case, should the soviet government again take the field, this will prove that it feels the ground slipping under its feet at home, and that it is resorting to a foreign war in order to forestall a civil war.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SIDELIGHTS ON SOVIETLAND

[The three following selections are from comparatively recent Petrograd and Moscow papers — of course published under Bolshevist control. Nevertheless, to the reader able to analyze their import, they give a surer glimpse behind the Russian veil than the best accounts of outside observers. The first selection is from a little sheet, *Derevenskaya Communa*, evidently printed for propaganda among the peasants. The last two are from the leading official daily, *Krasnaya Gazeta*.]

I

THE mild evening, delicately tinged by the setting sun, acted, it must be, as a soothing influence upon my friends as well; for the locksmith Bodriaeff and the peasant Froloff, who had just exchanged harsh and insulting words, responded eagerly to my proposal to go rowing, and amicably set about finding the best preserved rowboat to be had among those scattered along the shore.

A little later, when the white twilight of the short northern night was beginning to thicken, and when the last gleams of evening light were dying away in the forest glades, we three, pushing off, slowly glided with the current, while Froloff, seated at the helm, guided the boat with a piece of board.

Nature's beautiful melancholy repose overpowered us, and for a long time we were silent. As if fearing to disturb her gracious calm, we involuntarily surrendered ourselves to gentle revery.

Bodriaeff was the first to speak. 'It's wonderful,' he said almost in a whisper; 'how can it be that dawn and twilight meet? Over there, behind the hill, the sunset is still glowing, and here on the other side of the sky rosy stars are already scattered. It looks as if the dawn were already near.'

'Yes,' I replied, in the same half-whisper as Bodriaeff, 'right now, before our eyes, nature is performing a marvelously interesting and mysterious feat. The sun, with her two blood-red burning wings has just covered our whole earthly globe like a bird its young one. One can see this only here, in the north. In the south it is not visible.'

'And why does all this, for example, take place like this?' musingly Froloff began to speak. 'That the sun is embracing the earth? And where did the sun itself come from? Learned men know all this, I suppose, but we ignorant people, you know, know nothing about it.'

'You are mistaken, comrade,' I replied; 'even learned men don't know everything. Up to this time, humanity has been wandering among the secrets of nature as in a profound darkness. And all this is because in the old order, separate individuals occupied themselves with the sciences. And of great scholars on the earth there were and are so few that you can count them on your fingers. But when communism spreads over the world, not solitary individuals but millions of people will be busied with the study of nature — then it will be possible for humanity to penetrate into all the secrets of existence, and all its riddles will be solved.'

My companions did not reply, and we again became silent.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Froloff, who had listened to me attentively, smiled slyly and pushed our boat, which was keeping close to the shore, into the middle of the stream.

Bodriaeff did not take his eyes from the East, and from his thin, clean-shaven face and tightly pressed lip, it was evident that he was in a profound emotion.

'Here now, comrade,' after a long silence Froloff began to speak, 'you say everything is communism, but what this communism is, that again we don't know. What sort of a thing is this communism of yours, for example?'

'Communism is like the sun,' I said. 'When after several hours the sun has risen to the very centre of the heavenly vault, in the forest there will not be found one tree, not one branch, not one blade of grass, which is not warmed, illumined, and caressed by it. And on the many acres of wheat fields every spike will be gilded by the sun's kiss. That is what communism is. When it rises over humanity all people will be happy, and among us there will be no unfortunates, no oppressed, no humble ones, none without rights. Communism will destroy greed, envy, and angry feelings, because all will live equally easily and freely. And men will be brothers and not brute beasts.'

'That would be fine, if it were so.' With a touch of amusement in his voice Froloff began to speak, bending his white head to the side. 'But here's what's the trouble: it's absolutely impossible to make people equal, for example.'

'Why is it impossible?'

'They don't want to be equal. People, you know, are not sheep; you won't gather them all into one flock. Each one, for example, will pull over to his own side. I, let us say, get up to work when it's scarcely light, and my neighbor is still only drinking tea. And here again with respect to rations. I, for example, will eat up a pound; but my neighbor, for example. . . .'

'Drop it, your "for example,"' suddenly burst out Bodriaeff, who up to this time had been silent. 'Why do you spoil the air with your stupid words all for nothing. We have heard these arguments of yours. How, you say, is it possible to make all equal if one devours a lot and another a little; one is lazy and another is industrious. — You're a dung beetle, that's what I'll answer you. . . .'

'Pardon me,' I broke in upon Bodriaeff, seeing that the peaceful conversation was again approaching a quarrel. 'Froloff is right according to his own ideas. He does not know what communism is and cannot picture it to himself. And he is not the only one, for I know educated people who think exactly the same. It's a pity that it is already late, and time for us all to go to rest; but otherwise I would explain in detail just what communism is, and it is possible that Froloff would begin to think differently. Here, if you like, to-morrow we can come together again and converse.'

'That would be very pleasant,' eagerly agreed Bodriaeff.

Froloff made fast on shore. We got out of the boat, shook hands cordially, and departed our separate ways to our homes.

II

The commune, 'A Spark of Life,' founded in the township of Voroshilovsky, the district of Roslavsky, the province of Smolensk, shows what harm the so-called 'false communists' can do to the development of the idea of collectivism in the villages. For two whole years civil war has been

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

waged between the population of the township and the members of the so-called 'farm-commune.' It must be noted that the district unanimously recognizes the soviet government. Until the agricultural communards appeared on the scene, there was no anti-soviet agitation. The population of the district spontaneously concluded that the improvement of agriculture made mutual aid indispensable. They, therefore, decided to organize the 'Voroshilovsky Farmers' Coöperative Association,' which should establish a cultural centre; organize farm demonstration and experimental work; teach hand-weaving, fruit-growing, cattle-raising, and nursery-gardening; and hold lectures and debates on agricultural questions. They decided to utilize a certain expropriated estate, for this purpose.

At that time, in the spring of 1918, two men, Boyaroff and Bobroff, well known to all the surrounding population as rough-necks and robbers, returned from the city. Proclaiming themselves 'communists,' they were able to win the confidence of the district and provincial authorities, and against the wishes of all the people were appointed members of the township and district executive committees. This appointment created indignation in that vicinity, and destroyed popular confidence in the authorities. The further acts of these new communists only aggravated the situation. All the worst characters in the district gathered together around them and formed the farm-commune 'A Spark of Life,' which was allotted the estate which the Coöperative Association had proposed to use for its rural welfare centre.

Here is how the peasants themselves describe the way these communards live, in complaints which they have sent to the Commissariat of Agriculture.

'Instead of brotherhood and equality the members of that commune have continual disputes, quarrels, and abuse. Toward the people they behave like our former masters, as if we were a lower class and ought to support them, the do-nothings, the way we supported our masters. They confiscate everything in the villages without weighing, measuring, or keeping accounts. They tried, one day, to collect for their farm-commune seven pigs from each village. They have continued to be the same loafers and idlers they always were. They have burned the roofs and fences of the estate for fire-wood. Although they have excellent scythes and rakes, in the summer of 1918 and 1919 they gathered in much less hay than their neighbors, who worked without implements. They pasture their cattle so carelessly that the animals continually go hungry, spoil the grain and meadows, and part of them will die. Their kitchen-gardens are a mass of weeds. Although they have every advantage over us, they have not even raised enough grain and vegetables for their own support.'

One can easily conceive what indignation these communards aroused among the people of the vicinity; since the commune itself owed its existence to Boyaroff and Bobroff, who were on the executive committee. Finally the peasants completely lost patience over some unlawful confiscations and cases of outright robbery, and decided to take forcible measures with the committee itself. They expelled Boyaroff and Bobroff, and chose in their place men who enjoyed their confidence.

This caused an investigation which made clear all the guilt of the district soviet. Bobroff was condemned to be shot, but the sentence was later changed to forced labor.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We do not know the later fortunes of the farm-commune 'A Spark of Life,' or whether the Voroshilovsky Coöperative Association finally received the estate for its own use. But, undoubtedly, the people have viewed with moral satisfaction the punishment of these rogues.

We add another quotation from the complaint of the peasants to the Commissariat of Agriculture, without any change in its wording, because it so aptly characterizes their way of thinking. 'We don't enroll ourselves in the commune, not because we are stubborn, but because, measuring ourselves impartially, we clearly see that we are very unprepared and in the highest degree unfit to become members of a *real* commune, which strives to put in actual practice brotherhood and equality, in which we are very lacking. But in order to pave the way to that, one must put stone upon stone, and we think that voluntary agricultural coöperative societies will be such stones.'

III

In the room it was stifling and hot. Sleepy flies, buzzing lazily, flew from place to place. Through an open window came the rattle and rumble of street cars and the noise of street crowds.

Two ugly individuals in worn business suits with dirty stiff-starched collars were seated opposite each other at a writing table, scattered with many-colored hand-bills, books, and written note paper.

'How much have you earned on "Christ"?' gloomily asked one.

'Nothing worth mentioning. Thirty thousand roubles. "Anti-Christ" was better. For four lectures I got a hundred and fifty thousand roubles. And then it is so much easier to give!'

'Yes, it is certainly easier. . . . You can compare it with the present time. You pass rapidly over Bolshevism. . . . And, in general, certainly. . . . You have lectures to-morrow it seems?'

'Yes, two. One on the Nevsky: "Christ lived"; the other on the Petersburg side (the manufacturing district): "Christ did not live."'

'How many do you draw?'

'I think there will be sixty thousand roubles for the two lectures.'

'Oh, pretty good!'

'Well, what would you have! This is very difficult, you know! Two at once. And then, you understand, they're quite opposite, so to speak. Very difficult, one is obliged to concentrate terribly. I am giving them for the second time already. The first time there was a little scandal. . . . Because I said that Christ lived on Litania street, in the down-town district, and that he did n't live on the Nevsky. Well, you understand, I was confused as to where I must say he lived, and where he did n't live. . . . It came out of a misunderstanding. . .'

'That happens. . . It happened to me some days ago also. . . . I had to give a lecture on Socialism and Christianity, but I mixed up my notes and arrived at the lecture with notes on the Mass Production of Automobiles in America. Lord knows how those old notes got into my hands.'

'Well, what then? Did you get yourself out of the mess?'

'Yes, I stopped myself in time. It was nothing; it was passed over.'

'Yes,' lazily drawled the other, 'now we men of science can live. We enlighten the masses. . . Well, enough of chatter. Let's get to work.'

'Here, I propose this subject: The Holy Ghost and the Capitalistic Order.'

'Fine, fire ahead. You take that, and I will call my subject: "The Holy Ghost and Socialism."'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was stifling and hot. Only now and then a little breeze came through the open window, rustling the packages of hand-bills with their theological names. In the room, both men were hard at work: 'Marriage and the School,' 'Anti-Christ and Agriculture,' 'The Soul and the Body,' 'Death after Life,' 'Life after Death,' 'Christ and Anti-Christ.'

It was very oppressive.

But the God-specialists kept on writing.

. . . . . .

The many-colored posters which cover the house walls and fences in hundreds, with pompous announcements of lectures, have become a public nuisance. One is on 'The Religion of the Phoenicians and Babylonians,' another is by a 'specialist' on 'The Souls of Animals.' One part of the city is placarded with announcements of a lecture on: 'Lovers at the Time of the French Revolution.' Another poster informs us of a discussion of: 'God and Climate,' and so on.

What calls forth this flood of lectures, arguments, and discussions? Is there really such a demand for the nonsense which is being offered to the general public, in the form of lectures for which an admission fee is invariably charged?

Certainly not. Nor is all this activity due to interest in saving souls or promoting culture.

The existing thirst for knowledge is abundantly satisfied by our extensive school system, our People's Universities, and other institutions of learning. The streams of turbid words and thoughts I have described are not for workmen. Go to any lecture by such a 'God-seeker,' and you will find a typical middle-class crowd.

Thus the chief and only motive of the lecturer is money-making.

Driven out of cafés, smoked out from the art stores, these self appointed 'soviet' workers are out for an easy living. Not being restrained as to the means they adopt, they speculate in lectures and audiences.

Religious motives are a mere pretext! In these conventicles a lecturer can pour forth a small but pernicious stream of anti-semitism, Bonapartism, or any other 'ism' disguising insolent counter-revolution. Therefore, in order to put a decisive end to this riot of speculation, the Division of Popular Education of the Petrograd Soviet proposes to order the *abolition of all public paid lectures.*

Whoever wishes to serve education by speaking or teaching is free to apply to the local educational board, which will know how to use him. Besides, this will render available for other needed uses many public halls, which now are filled almost daily by the audiences of these paid lecturers.

[*Der Tag* (Berlin Conservative Daily), *January 11*]

SUNBEAMS AND CLOUDBANKS

BY CARL MÜLLER

[The reader must judge for himself whether this series of travel anecdotes reflects real sentiment toward Germany in the Near East, or merely the afterglow of Germany's vanished dreams.]

I. GEORGIA

GRAY mist lies over the harbor of Poti. Rain drums incessantly on the windows. The Rion hurls its yellow flood savagely against the piles of the bridges which German soldiers erected, when they came in 1917, to aid the nations of the Caucasus shake off the Russian yoke.

It is late afternoon. On-coming dusk adds its shadows to the impenetrable fog. The cracking of a whip is audible through the obscurity. A diminutive street car drawn by two mules and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lighted by a single smoky little kerosene lamp trundles past. It is the only means of communication in the city. I rush out to catch it. In vain. In a moment it is lost in the darkness around an unlighted corner. The *Bibliotheka*, where my steamer friends await me, is an hour's walk distant. How am I to get there? I am ignorant of the locality; the darkness and the increasing violence of the storm are poor guides for a stranger. Not a man is to be seen on the street. I stumble along over the broken pavements, when I hear footsteps approaching. A form appears in the darkness. The tall fur cap and rattling sword indicate a native.

When I ask my way to the *Bibliotheka*, the man simply shakes his head and says: 'Impossible, Sir! Impossible! You can't find it!'

His English 'Sir' told me that he had mistaken my nationality. I said I was a German. His face at once lighted up with an incredulous grin. 'A German? Here? Not on your life! Since the English came, the Germans have had to get out.'

I explain to him that I am a member of the crew of the Russian steamer at anchor in the harbor. Then he believes me. Shaking my hand heartily, he says: 'Come along. I'll take you to the *Bibliotheka*.'

I thank him, but protest that the weather is too bad. However, he will listen to no objection, and side by side, we stumble along down the muddy road. The rain whips us angrily in the face. The wind makes conversation difficult. Yet I can understand this much; he keeps praising the Germans.

One has to travel, as I have done, through the new world with which the peace has blessed us, hearing his nation condemned on every hand, to appreciate how gratefully the kindly compliments of this simple Caucasian fell upon my ears.

Dripping with water, we finally reach the entrance of the *Bibliotheka*. Doubly pleased with my adventure, I try to press a rather liberal gratuity upon my good guide. He refuses it, really offended at my offer. 'I am always glad to do a favor to a German.' He shakes my hand warmly and turns back on his hour's walk home.

My heart is warmed with joy. No matter how the press of the world may abuse us, it cannot extinguish friendship and kindly feeling everywhere. There are still people who honor and love us, and who still speak of us to-day with respect and admiration.

II. TIFLIS

Galavinskaya Prospect is fairly baking in the hot sun. Nevertheless, that main thoroughfare of the ancient city upon the Kura is crowded with people, richly costumed men and women, a rainbow effect of bright colored garments, an excitable impressionable throng, where the very intonation of voices and play of countenances betray a high-strung race. Were it not for the variety of nationalities — Russians, Persians, Tartars — one might almost fancy he were loitering along the promenade of a European seaside resort. But the dominant note is given by the slender forms of the Georgians, with their oval faces, their white skins, their strong features, and their jet black hair and eyes.

I saunter down the well-kept avenue. In the shade of the trees, fruit peddlers display their stocks. Circassians offer us great clusters of grapes, still bejeweled with the morning dew. Others are vending from goat-skin bottles, which they carry on their backs, the aromatic wines of the Caucasus. Pretty Tartar girls are shouting shrilly the merits of their oranges, figs, and chestnuts.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An English munitions column comes rattling down the street. Indian Gurkas sit trim and upright in the saddles of their mules, their little warlike figures as erect and expressionless as though they were on parade. Suddenly every head turns to the right. Following their glance, I pause in admiration before the magnificent building which meets my gaze. It is the most imposing structure of this great capital. There Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch reigned during the last years of the war, as monarch of the Caucasus. He had been banished to this point by the order of his imperial nephew, the Tsar, when the fortunes of battle began to turn against him. Spur-rattling English officers were now passing in and out its portals. They carelessly return the salutes of the Gurkas, whose perfectly disciplined glance met them eye to eye. A sharp command. The men again face front and the column sweeps on in a cloud of dust.

Ill-tempered at this discordant note in the idyllic impression which the city had made upon me, I turn toward the military museum. 'Stop!' An Indian soldier with fixed bayonet forbids my entrance. I explain to him, I wish to visit the Georgian Foreign Ministry. When he asks for my papers, I tell him I have only German credentials.

'A German!' His fiery eyes light up. 'Germans and Hindus are friends! Pass!'

III. CONSTANTINOPLE

Little wavelets break merrily around the bow of our steamer as we slowly draw up the Golden Horn. Hardly have we dropped anchor near the Galata Bridge when a launch runs alongside. Three English officers come aboard to inspect the cargo and crew. As a German, I am at once forbidden to go on shore. A soldier is left to guard me.

I stand alone by the rail. The bizarre tangle of houses along the water side is reflected in the waves below. Gorgeous palaces, white villas, picturesque mosques rise from shady gardens filled with slender cypresses and sun-gilded plane trees. The weather-worn city wall, built by Godfred of Boulogne, still defiantly surrounds ancient Stamboul. Behind the tight walls of the New Serail slumber the secrets of the Turkish sultans. My glance dwells admiringly on the gigantic structure of the Sophia Mosque, whose mighty dome is illumined by the rays of the declining sun. Even as I watch, the slender minarets which pierce the air above it are silhouetted against the evening red.

Suddenly, little doors at the summit open, and the muezzins appear. With extended arms, they pray in a loud voice that the protection of The Highest may be vouchsafed bitterly tried Byzantium.

Allahu akbar, la ilata illallah!— and in the streets below, patrolled by enemy sentries armed to the teeth, the faithful kneel upon their prayer rugs. With faces to Mecca, they intone the chant in praise of Allah and of Mohammed, His prophet.

Here and there, the first lights begin to twinkle. Soon the great city is aglow with them. A throng of people presses across Galata Bridge in both directions — a vociferous, gesticulating mob of men of every land and every tongue.

I am seized with longing to be out there among my fellows. Why should I be kept apart? Is this war? Am I a prisoner? Shall I be forever an outlaw in every country merely because I am a German?

I start with a shock. A hand has been quietly laid on my arm. A ragged Turk stands at my shoulder. His left index finger is pressed warningly against his closed lips. Nearby, my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

British guard lies stretched at length. Is he asleep? The hands of the old man make mysterious gestures.

They say to me: 'See that boat? I have come for you. All right. No one will discover you. You Germans are now among friends.'

IV. EGYPT

In the land of the Pharaohs, likewise, I was forbidden by the English to go on shore. Nevertheless, with a Russian passport in my pocket, I wandered happily, the evening of my arrival, along the glorious palm avenues of Muhamed Ali Square. Here, the fashionable world of Alexandria takes the air. A refreshing breeze from the Nile sweeps through the trees. The charm of a perfect evening rests on my soul.

Europeans saunter along at ease. Orientals pass conversing with a sort of dignified vivacity. Turbans and kaftans are seen here and there; but the fez with its tassel constantly tossing in accompaniment to the lively conversation of its wearer is by far the most common headgear. Dark-eyed, slender, white-veiled Egyptian women move silently through the throng.

An old story teller, squatting on the ground, repeats a long rhymed tale to a circle of listeners. Their ejaculations of approval punctuate his narrative. Are we actually back in the land of Arabian Nights? A crash of music destroys that illusion. English troops approach led by their regimental band. Parade! Thus do masters impress their power upon their servitors.

However, the Egyptians ignore the episode with studied indifference. As soon as the Tommies have passed, you hear muttered conversation and scornful laughter. Angry flashes light up every eye as if to say, 'The day will come when no Briton will remain upon the banks of the Nile!' Well content with my impression, I continue my walk and find myself unintentionally lost in the tangled alleys of the Arab quarter. Even the omnipresent filth does not rob them of their picturesque charm. But what is this? In a dark corner, I am suddenly surrounded by brown forms. They press upon me threateningly. 'Cursed Englishman! Down with the rascal!' I understand in a flash. 'No Englishman! I German!' The lifted arms sink. 'Nemsi! Ah!— a German!'

The circle opens. Folding their arms ceremoniously across their breasts, they repeat in chorus their welcome: 'Salam! Salam!' The leader of the gang steps up to me with a radiant face, and proudly repeats: 'Allah guard Germany! Our mighty friend!'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

THE YOUNG MEN

WHAT of the young men who fought the war? In spite of all the propagandists, in spite of all the typhoons of rhetoric, to-day's world remains much the same cruel and inhuman mechanism that it was in 1914. And the young men, who saw the years of horror, are they going to take it all as a kind of a sinister jest, laugh ironically, and return to the world asking only forgetfulness? Who would answer yes to such question little knows the leaders of the younger generation! Power is not theirs yet, but some day it will come to their hands, and a generous spirit will rule, which should in time lead to a world one can behold, as Henry Adams wrote, 'without a shudder.' The soldier generation has no communist dream. It bows its neck to no yoke either semitic or proletarian. It yields allegiance to no vague dream of brotherhood, but contents itself with the sane possibility of trying to create a tolerant spirit and a consciousness of a common human destiny and aim. *Debout les morts!* Your generous blood shall not have been spent in vain.

I am moved to these reflections by a reading of *Gun Fodder*, a diary of the war by Hamilton Gibbs, Sir Philip Gibbs's youngest brother. It is a first-rate book; the narrative is clear-cut and swift of movement, and the descriptive elements most praiseworthy. But it is the spirit of the book which has particularly pleased me. Humane, tolerant, realistic, resolutely determined never to let the horror happen again, *Gun Fodder* is a fine revelation of the young soldier's mind. It will not do to forget that mind. Some day it will come into its own.

H. B.

Mr. Robert Nichols

MR. ROBERT NICHOLS, the poet and critic, who recently completed a lecture tour in America, is leaving England for Japan to take the chair of English literature at the Imperial College, Tokio, which was first occupied by the late Lafcadio Hearn. He has given the *Observer* an interview very typical of the young generation which survived the war. Said Mr. Nichols:

'I am going to Japan as much to learn as to teach. I am not going to try to teach so much the history of English literature or philology, of which I have really only a passing acquaintance, as the spirit which has given England the finest body of poetry possessed by any nation in the world.

'Nor am I going in a spirit of Jingoism to spread ideas about English literature. I am going to try to give my idea of what English literature has brought to mankind, not what it has brought to the English nation alone. In talking about Shakespeare, for example, I would rather stress the humanity of Falstaff than the megalomania of Henry V, because my idea is that nations are only great in so far as they have deepened mankind's consciousness. For that reason, Newton appears to me a much greater man than Napoleon, and Pascal than Bismarck.

'The progress of nations, I consider, is to be measured in the same way as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the life of individuals, not according to the old Christian or Mohammedan idea of so much virtue or so much backsliding being rewarded at the last judgment with a definite heaven or hell, but under the aspect, which incidentally has appealed to Goethe and to Mozart, of a series of initiations. This idea was expressed by Mozart in *The Magic Flute*, and by Goethe in the second part of *Faust*. Goethe, indeed, made the finest remark about the progress of the individual or the nation that has ever been made. These four lines were translated by Charles Sorley, who was killed in the war:

Yea, in this thought lies my whole life's persistence.
This is the sum, the total of the true:
He only earns his freedom, owns existence,
Who every day must conquer her anew!

'It seems to me,' Mr. Nichols continued, 'that western civilization has reached a certain stage of initiation in modern scientific knowledge. It has learned quite how dangerous knowledge can be. The next stage is to learn to cure itself of the danger that arises from scientific knowledge misapplied.

'The arts and sciences exist for the discovery of law in nature, but in the process of discovery they serve another purpose not originally theirs — they discover the bonds between the different races of human kind. In the spectacle of the abyss of phenomena, each divisible into smaller phenomena, which physics present to us, mankind discovers its isolation between the infinitely great and the infinitely little, both at present equally inexplicable.

'The great function that art and science exercise, though not originally theirs, is to give to man a sense of his isolation and the need for solidarity. In common with a great many other English youths I entered the war hoping that it would be a war to end war. I am now in process of discovering that it is not so much the jugglings of politicians, the greed of individuals, or the short-sightedness of specific races that permits the recrudescence of war, as the lack of any sense of solidarity among human kind — the lack of a sense that we are, as it were, obscure vermin inhabiting a third-class planet.

'The alternative lies before us to realize this, and work together, or to perish by the very knowledge that was originally gained for the help of human kind by the only unacknowledged real trade unions in existence, those of artists and scientists, who make their knowledge the property of the world in return for the bare necessities of life, and whose knowledge is turned by the blind and the ignorant and the indifferent to the purpose, not of creation, but of destruction.

'If, in imparting such knowledge as I have to the Japanese, and if, in bringing back from Japan such knowledge as I shall have gained to the English, I shall succeed in making full use of the three years before me, I feel I shall have done something worth doing in increasing this sense of solidarity. For what is needed now is consciousness in man that the rights of the individual must be subservient to the rights of the whole.

'In Japan, I understand, the word "I" does not exist. It is to learn more for myself how little this word "I" should exist, and how much the word "we" counts, that I am taking on a piece of work which at best must indeed be difficult, and at worst may cost me more than I think.'

From a Disraeli Calendar

Lord and Lady Mountjoy, . . . unfortunate people, who with a large fortune, lived in a wrong square, and asked to their house everybody who was nobody.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'Does your Highness take snuff?' 'Thank you, no; I've left off snuff ever since I passed a winter at Baffin's Bay. You've no idea how very awkward an accidental sneeze is near the pole.'

'It is very immoral, and very unfair,' said Lord Milford, 'that any man should marry for tin who does not want it.'

'They say primroses make a capital salad,' said Lord St. Jerome.

Time has brought us substitutes, but how inferior! Man has deified corn and wine! but not even the Chinese or the Irish have raised temples to tea and potatoes.

How those rooks bore! I hate staying with ancient families, you're always cawed to death.

Her features were like those conceptions of Grecian sculpture which, in moments of despondency, we sometimes believe to be ideal.

I hate a straightforward fellow. As Pinto says, if every man were straightforward in his opinion, there would be no conversation.

A coquette is a being who wishes to please. Alas! coquettes are too rare. 'Tis a career that requires great abilities, infinite pains, a gay and airy spirit . . . A charming character at all times; in a country house an invaluable one.

'Well, I always have had a prejudice against Pontius Pilate,' said Lord Cadurois.

Nothing is more undignified than to make a speech. . . . .Every charlatan is an orator, and almost every orator is a charlatan.

I declare, when I was eating that truffle, I felt a glow about my heart, that, if it were not indigestion, I think must have been gratitude.

. . . . . .

What do these accents recall? or, rather, what did they anticipate? Is there anything closer in English to the manner of Oscar Wilde?

Paris and London Architecturally Considered

THE Paris of to-day is a spectacular city built for great striking effects. It is a city designed for the celebration of triumphs. Long vistas lead the eye away and away, and awake in the mind desires for the distant, the difficult to achieve. Great buildings and monuments stand in wide open spaces, where their beauties can be immediately appreciated. Grandeur answers to grandeur, beckoning symmetrically. How different it is from London, where everything conceals itself, where no statement is made without reservations! St. Paul's has scarcely space to breathe; the new Westminster Cathedral is totally suffocated, and nobody has any idea what it looks like from outside. A railway runs practically through Southwark Cathedral. Almost all our principal streets are narrow and tortuous, and have the further merit of leading nowhere in particular. Most of our open spaces, such as Hyde Park Corner, are without any point; and where, as in the case of Trafalgar Square, they are meant to be impressive and glorious, obscure, incongruous buildings are allowed to ruin the whole effect.

It must not be thought that I am complaining of London. Far from it. Paris is excellent for a change and as a stimulant. But for continued inhabitation give me London. Who would live in a theatre or monumental palace when he might live in an unpretentious house? In Paris, too, the passion for the spectacular has sometimes carried the designers of the city beyond the bounds of common sense. No one but a monomaniac for vistas could have conceived the plan of making the Gothic-cum-Rococo-Oriental Trocadero peep through the straddling legs of the Eiffel Tower, down the whole length of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Champ de Mars, at the stately eighteenth-century Ecole Militaire. The effect is indescribably buffoonish.

An attempt has been made of recent years to make London grandiose and spectacular after the manner of Paris. The efforts have not been crowned with success. No street in London is more depressing, none more profoundly alien than Kingsway, planned and executed entirely on the spectacular model of Paris. The English temperament does not hold with glory and theatricality and large gestures. It has needed a tremendous amount of propaganda to make anyone in these islands take the smallest interest in the Empire. The ordinary Englishman finds it prodigiously difficult to feel glorious about the immense concern. It is only dons and journalists and politicians who have any feeling about it. Perhaps, if modern London had been, or could have been, built as a spectacular city like Paris, the English would have had a better idea of their gloriousness. But the climate was against us. Glory is naturally compatible only with fine weather and clear air.

A Free Translation!

An amusing story is being told at a literary club. A French version of *The Stickit Minister* was recently projected, and the translator sent the proofs to an English friend. The first thing which arrested his attention was the title, which had been somewhat freely rendered as *Le Ministre Assassiné.*

Jane Austen

John Murray has just published *Personal Aspects of Jane Austen* by Mary A. Austen-Leigh.

Relics of Byron

At the sale at the famous old abbey near Nottingham by Knight, Frank and Rutley, now taking place, the last considerable collection of Lord Byron's personal belongings will be dispersed. The connection of the Byron family with the abbey has been a long one, and although the poet was not born there, but in Holles-street, Cavendish-square, London, in 1788, his association with it was a close one. The 'wicked Lord Byron,' the poet's great uncle, killed his cousin, Mr. Chaworth, in a duel, and being acquitted, lived thenceforth in seclusion at Newstead. 'Foul-weather Jack,' Admiral John Byron, the poet's grandfather, was another occupant, and his father, the handsome gambler, racing man, and duellist, who captivated the Marchioness of Carmarthen, and married her when divorced by the Marquis. On her death Captain Byron married Miss Gordon, a Scots lady, who brought him wealth, and his poet son.

Included in the sale is the manuscript grant by James I of Newstead, dated 1616, the famous abbey having survived from much earlier times, commemorated in an old Italian altar, carved with figures of saints with a high back containing a needlework panel, the subject of which is Thomas à Becket, in expiation of whose martyrdom the abbey of Newstead was founded. Other important pieces, highly carved, are a Gothic oak credence and a Flemish armoire. There are also a fine Jacobean oak four-post bedstead, dated 1627, said to have been the property of Oliver Cromwell, and a Tudor bedstead with ornate carved posts and panels.

Associated immediately with the poet is a copy of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,* which has been Graingerized with fine plates and water-color portraits of Wordsworth, Southey, and Samuel Rogers, and mezzotints of others, bound in morocco, with manuscripts of Wordsworth, Thomas Moore, and others in a large folio volume.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[*The Outlook*]

OSCAR WILDE: A PORTRAIT OF THE 'NINETIES

BY E. T. RAYMOND

ONE evening in the early summer of 1895, the newsboys were shouting 'All the winners.' Yet one line on their placards gave the lie to that eternal cry which mocks the deaths of great men and the fall of great Empires. It referred to the sentence which, in due time, was to give birth to the one quite genuine thing Oscar Wilde wrote, the *Ballad of Reading Gaol*. Oscar Wilde was one of the losers; in the long list of men of genius who have paid just forfeit, it was not easy to think of a more tragic figure. Others had fallen from greater heights; none had gone more friendlessly to a lower perdition. For it was the very element of his tragedy that it could not be shared or alleviated; on the path he had henceforth to tread there could be no comrade; his offense was one at which charity itself stood embarrassed, and compassion felt the fear of compromise. On this very evening, two theatres were full of people chuckling over jests of almost wicked brilliance which he had turned and re-turned, polished and sharpened, with the laborious care of a lapidary, for he worked at trifles with tremendous earnestness, and the ease of the style was the reward of immense pains on the part of the writer. Two of his comedies were being played while the drama of his trial was proceeding on another stage. Business is business, and managers with money at stake did not care to withdraw immediately good money-drawing pieces. But they made a due *amende* to outraged decency. They played Wilde's plays, but they struck his name out of the bill. The action might be mean. But it was understandable. There was no harm in the plays, but the name could hardly be pronounced without offense.

Even at this distance, when there can be pity without suspicion of condonation, it is not easy to discuss Wilde as we should any other author whose influence was considerable in his day and generation. Yet those who would pass by this ill-starred man of genius because of the event which interrupted his career as a writer would be acting almost as foolishly as the absurd people (mostly Germans) who on the same account yield him a perverse and irrational homage. Wilde was not only important in himself; he was still more important as the representative of a mood still to some extent with us, but extraordinarily prevalent in the latter years of the nineteenth century. Of this mood he was in letters the only able English representative. There were many men who thought his thoughts, and even attempted to write his style. But they are now forgotten except by the curious; Wilde alone survives. This mood was in certain aspects one of honesty, in others one of cowardice; it was never a mood of health. The honesty was negative; it took the form of protest against certain easy and conventional shams. The cowardice was positive; it took the form of fearing to stand in competition with great realities. People like Wilde had sense to detect, and virility to denounce, certain poor players of old

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tricks; they had not the courage to be themselves quite genuine people; they contented themselves on the whole with doing newer tricks. There was no harm in this in itself. But they had also much conceit, and so, to impress the public with a due sense of their importance, they insisted that the tricks of which they were capable were really the only tricks worth doing. Their art was Art itself, and the only Art.

Now, it takes all sorts to make any kind of world, and there is no sense in expecting an artist whose gift is miniature painting to follow Paul Veronese. By all means let him sneer at any dull fool who does follow Paul Veronese. But we shall do well to take very little notice of him when he says that no picture should be painted on anything larger than six square inches of ivory. A Japanese *netsuke* is a pleasing object; so is Ely Cathedral. Let the *netsuke* carver have his due credit. But if he began to talk as if Ely Cathedral were a pretentious vulgarity, which he himself could easily have built if (in Johnson's phrase) he had 'abandoned his mind to it,' we should quickly tell him to mind his own business. But this was very much the pose of Wilde and his school. They were right in depreciating uninspired imitators of great men. They were wrong in depreciating all greatness which could not be measured by their own small tapes. They were especially wrong in declaring that 'popular art is bad art,' and setting up their own literary jade-work, often graceful and pleasant enough in its own way, as the only standard of taste. 'Only the great masters of style,' said Oscar Wilde once, 'ever succeeded in being obscure.'

If that were literally true, he himself, though self-called a 'lord of language,' would have to be denied the title of stylist, for though he sometimes showed some confusion of thought, and very often said things so silly that one sometimes looks a second time to see whether they are really meant, he was, on the whole, quite extraordinarily lucid. But the words do mean something and reveal something. Every very great writer is obscure in the sense that he does somehow contrive to offer a choice to his reader; thus everybody has his own particular view of *Hamlet*, and of many individual passages in *Hamlet*, though the actual obscurities are very few. But Shakespeare never meant *Hamlet* to be a mystery to anybody; he meant it simply to be a good play, and one understandable to every soul in the theatre. Shakespeare was thinking of his audience as something that was doing him a compliment in coming to hear his play. Wilde thought of his audience as something to be complimented by his condescension in amusing it. Shakespeare, in short, represented popular and obvious art at its highest, and there is no higher art.

Wilde, on the other hand, represented art that was above all things undemocratic. Its assumption was that whatever is popular must be vulgar, that whatever is unusual has at least a presumption of being fine. In such an attitude, whether to life or to art, there is an obvious spiritual danger, and it is not without reason that most people look for corruption where there is excessive refinement. After all, all the most important things men do must be either conventional or monstrous, and he who consciously strives to be much above the common herd in things mattering not very much is fatally prone to be dreadfully below it in things that really do matter. The country or age which can show great art with a simple and obvious motive is generally healthy. The country or age which attaches immense importance to the elaboration of trifles for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

esoteric appreciation is generally unhealthy. In these matters, wherever there is mystery there is evil.

'The two great turning-points of my life were when my father sent me to Oxford, and when society sent me to prison.' So says Wilde in *De Profundis*. His father was an oculist in Dublin, a clever, ill-balanced man of imperious passions and extravagant habits, who firmly believed that alcohol had pulled him through a severe illness, and drank freely on principle. Lady Wilde, poetess and Nationalist pamphleteer, was disappointed with Oscar in much the same way that Betsy Trotwood was disappointed with David Copperfield; she wanted a daughter, and, since nature had denied her, she sought consolation by dressing, treating, and talking to the boy as if he had been a girl. It was one of the innumerable oddities of this lady to pretend descent from great people — she believed herself to come from a stem of the same tree which yielded Dante the poet — and the boy was named Oscar because his mother imagined herself to have some sort of connection with the Royal Family of Sweden.

It was an unwholesome, if brilliant, atmosphere in which Oscar Wilde grew up, and the boy early contracted those habits of extravagance which led him, when in London, to spend hundreds a year in the matter of cabs alone. Neither at school nor at Oxford did he take any interest in sport, but he was devoted to his blue and white china, his antiques, and his wall papers. This æstheticism earned him the resentment of some robust fellow-undergraduates, and he was once tied up in a rope and dragged to the top of a hill; when released he merely flicked the dust off his clothes and remarked 'Yes, the view is really very charming.' Perhaps the most important event of his Oxford life was the winning of the Newdigate prize. His success decided him to take up literature as a profession. And in order to make a short cut into literature, he placed himself at the head of the æsthetes, clean-shaven and long-haired, in 'a velvet coat, knee-breeches, a loose shirt with a turn-down collar, and a floating tie of some unusual shade fastened in a Lavalliere knot,' carrying in his hand 'a lily or a sunflower which he used to contemplate with an expression of the greatest admiration.'

The notoriety naturally following on this masquerade had its advantages in the way of dinner invitations, lecture engagements, and, to some extent, the smiles of publishers. But Wilde earned little and had to spend a good deal in maintaining his position; and, despite a lecturing venture in America, it was not until his marriage with Miss Constance Lloyd in 1884, that he settled down to anything like satisfactory employment. For such a man, the post of editor of the *Woman's World* could hardly be amusing, and Wilde retained the bitterest recollections of his connection with journalism. 'In centuries before ours,' he once wrote, 'the public nailed the ears of journalists to the pump. That was quite hideous. In this century journalists have nailed their own ears to the key-hole. That is much worse.' It was not, in fact, until the 'nineties had well opened that Wilde began to make good and to relieve the strain on his wife's little fortune which his extravagant habits caused. *Dorian Gray*, published in 1891, was a doubtful artistic success and a quite undoubtful commercial failure. But at the beginning of the next year *Lady Windermere's Fan* at once took the fancy of London. Wilde had made several attempts to conquer the stage, but partly inexperience and partly obstinacy had so far stood in his way. 'I hold,' he said, 'that the stage

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is to a play no more than a picture frame is to a painting.' But a frame can generally be made to accommodate any picture, and no stage could properly accommodate some plays.

Wilde once argued for the performance of plays by puppets. 'They have many advantages. They never argue. They have no crude views about art. They have no private lives. We are never bored by accounts of their virtues, or bored by recitals of their vices; and when they are out of an engagement they never do good in public or save people from drowning. . . . They recognize the presiding intellect of the dramatist, and have never been known to ask for their parts to be written up.' A man holding such views — which perhaps are only a mad extension of a sane position — was likely to remain for long unacted. But when he left behind him the intricacies of five-act tragedy, and found his true *metier* in comedy, his success was instantaneous.

And it was well deserved. The Wilde comedies 'date' a good deal. They are rather monotonous in their brilliancy. There is too much of a particular trick; one is always expecting the unexpected. The characters sit round to exchange epigrams rather too much like the Moore and Burgess Minstrels used to sit round to exchange conundrums, with a 'Mr. Johnson' at one corner and a 'Mr. Somebody-else' at the other. The epigrams themselves are often forced and sometimes merely foolish. There is little characterization; all Wilde's men are wits, or the butts of wits, and his women, broadly speaking, are unimportant. But when all deductions are made, his comedies are among the best in the language. *Lady Windmere's Fan* was followed a year later by *A Woman of No Importance*, and in 1895 by *An Ideal Husband* and — the best of the series — *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

From circumstances of considerable embarrassment, Wilde suddenly mounted to high prosperity. But the change was all for the worse. With his tendencies to physical self-indulgence, a plentiful supply of ready money tempted him to fatal excess in eating and drinking, and he was a man to whom exercise of any kind was repellent. On his unsound mental constitution the brilliance of his position and prospects had an equally unfortunate effect. He grew fat and bloated in person, and absurdly inflated in conceit. His features, once handsome with the comeliness of some face on a classic coin, were now puffed and of impure outline, and the richness of dress which he affected degenerated into a greasy luxuriousness. He had only three years of prosperity, but those were enough to show that he had neither the mind nor the physical constitution to bear success. Even before the tragedy which cut short his working life, his friends had begun to fall away, and it was pretty clear that his career as a creative artist was likely to be limited.

Of the last chapters of his unhappy history, nothing can usefully be said. The expiation was no less horrible than the sin; his last piteous work may suggest that there was final penitence and rest. But there was so much of the artificial in Wilde that it was never quite safe to infer when he was genuine and when histrionic. Almost his whole life had been spent in posing. Yet his mind was naturally precise and logical; with proper discipline, it would have been of quite masculine strength. 'There is something tragic,' he once said, 'about the enormous number of young men there are in England at the present moment who start life with perfect profiles, and end by adopting some useful profession.' He would have been better with a useful profession.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To adapt his own words, there is something tragic about the enormous number of young men there are in England at the present moment who start life with some Greek and Latin, a knack of good form and social dexterity, a more than competent physique, enough money to enable them to spend a few of their best years in rather laborious idleness, and no notion of giving the world a full equivalent of what they propose to take out of it. The number of young women in much the same case is scarcely less disquieting. The real moral of Wilde's tragedy is not the obvious one. It is rather that even highly gifted people should have some honest trade to begin with, and leave 'art' and 'literature' (apart from such branches as are really trades and handicrafts) until, mayhap, they find themselves positively impelled thereto. If that were the rule, the world would be poorer by some millions of bad pictures and unpleasant novels, but indefinitely richer in human cleanliness and honesty.

[*The New Statesman*]

IN THE AIR

BY ARCHDALL REID

'COME along,' said the youthful Major who was also a very famous airman.

I followed as to slaughter, and presently stretched elderly legs up the high sides of the Avro. The mechanic in front and the Major in the pilot's seat exchanged incantations. 'Contact,' barked the one. 'Contact,' responded the other. Thereupon the devil that dwelt in the machine awoke, roaring. The mechanic slipped aside. We rushed forward, and up, and away. I had been told by all who loved and trembled for me to keep my mind and my eyes concentrated on my boots on pain of being catastrophically sick. As well tell a boy to keep his tongue from the hole whence a tooth has been extracted. I looked over instantly. Nothing happened, not even a sense of giddiness or danger. One sat up to the neck in a well and gazed, as it were, from a high window. Whoever can do that with comfort may fly with happiness. The platform, not the vehicle, seemed to move. The ground fell away. For a moment I had an intimate view of the tops of trees and the roofs of sheds. A moment later, and they were remote and toylike.

On the left, with hills and woods beyond, was the great sea inlet, reflecting cloud and sky, and dotted with ships to which their triangular wakes gave an appearance of enormous speed. On the right was England, vividly green, financially neat, miraculously beautiful, cut into irrationally small fields no bigger seemingly than backyards, and utterly empty of life. The narrow, twisting roads stretched vacant, for one looked on the heads of men and from that height inexperienced eyes saw them not. It was a day of thick but broken clouds. Those above flung lakes of traveling shadow. Those below, of thinner texture, white as sunlight snow, but fleecy and transparent, crept, so it seemed, among the very hedgerows.

We had no speaking tube. The pilot turned his grave young face in scrutiny. Had he the impudence to suppose that I, a rational being, in charge of a man who had been described as 'one of the three or four finest fliers in the world' was afraid? I waved ecstatically. Incontinently, he plunged into a cloud and banked steeply. Up, in the semi-obscurity, rose one wing, down sank the other; and one stared through drifting mist at dim fields directly below. For a moment terror gripped one. Then came recollection of the fame of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the pilot. If I had only one life, he had no more, and he would be unlikely to risk his only neck for the pleasure of frightening me. We emerged into clear air on level wings, and presently were over a country town, a neat red patch in a neat green land. And it was void and nothing moved thereon. The engine was shut off, and the Avro planed like a seagull, silently over the silent fields to the aerodrome miles away.

'Found it exciting?' said the Major.

'Well, most interesting. But about as exciting as a cab-drive,' said I, chaffing.

'You must come again,' said he with dangerous cordiality.

A fortnight later I went.

At first, we watched a 'formation' about to start for a practice flight. At word of command each plane took on a dreadful semblance of insect life. Propellers waved like monstrous antennæ; engines buzzed a gigantic threat; machines ran forward cocking their tails with gestures shockingly animate. They took the air; and, as they passed above, one shrank from the imminent pounce of long legs which would bear the victim to Heaven knows what awful feast. So I had seen flies in the inhuman clutch of wasps, and, in the distance, seaplanes bearing their floats like prey beneath them. One machine remained behind, buzzing intermittently, cocking and uncocking its tail, crawling hither and thither, like a wounded, furious hornet. It had engine troubles.

My new pilot was an airman no less famous than the Major, and this time there was a speaking tube. We flew over the town wherein I dwell; on the ground no mean city, from the air an inconsiderable collection of huts among which it was impossible to identify the hovel which is my home. Returning, the pilot spied an accustomed speck on the ground. 'Chap in trouble. Must help a brother airman.' In a long field was a smiling youth beside an undamaged plane. Engine failure, help was coming. Reassured, we sought to rise again. But at some remote period that field had been trenched, and at every few yards were depressions into which the plane bumped. The pilot drew close to one long side, rushed between furrows at the opposite hedge, jumped it as prettily as a dog, swayed between flashing, ancient trees, and so reached the upper air.

'Loop the loop,' said the voice in my ear. The plane, plunging first to gather speed, soared up, and over, backward — very smoothly. And, as it seemed, the universe, not the plane turned. The skies swirled away, and there, hanging awfully in high heaven, were the fields — an unforgettable enormity. At that moment my stomach was just behind my teeth, and at the exact centre of the universe. The fields whirled away, and there were the spinning skies again. Thereafter came confusion. Events followed so fast that, as with men in ardent battle, they left no memory. I am told we looped several times, and that, with my consent, we rolled — that is, looped sideways. But of all this nothing lingers.

I remember, however, the beginning of the spinning dive which commenced before my astonished stomach had quite recovered its ancient seat. The nose of the machine dipped vertically, and the fields began to spin from right to left. Faster and faster they spun till we looked down on a vast top in which objects merged, and the limits of which were at the dazzling horizon. The end of that also is lost. Again we floated on level wings at a moderate height — moderate as air heights go, two thousand feet or so. We were about to perform the 'falling leaf.' I had heard of this as provocative of prodigious sick-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness, and reflected bitterly on man's inhumanity to man. The engine was shut off, the plane tipped sideways, and one stared on the fields — over the right shoulder. It rolled back, and one stared at the fields over the left shoulder. Again, and again, and yet again. Nausea gripped me, disaster threatened, humiliation was at hand. But, happily, before the dread consummation, the limits of safety were reached.

We were getting too low. It was necessary to start the engine and for that speed was required. As in the spinning dive, the nose was turned down, and we fell as a stone falls, but, if I remember rightly, with a dramatic inclination backwards so that the pilot's head and all the front part of the plane seemed clear behind the passenger. Yet, I sat firm in my seat. Already we were falling as fast as gravity could compass. The wind we made roared in my ears and turned the propellers, the engine picked up, and we rushed at mother earth, less than three hundred yards away, at an *infernal* pace. Objects on the ground swelled as balloons swell; but instantly, and magically, and awfully. Instinct shrieked that I was about to die, but reason still whispered that I was safe.

Zoop. We had turned, we had curved, we were soaring upward, and I was filled with enormous exultation. The pilot turned in laughter. Afterward, he said that my unconscious war-whoopings had nearly ruptured his ears.

The Major was waiting for us.

'Found it exciting this time?' said he.

'Well, not bad,' said I.

'Come and have a drink, you humbug,' said he.

Thus I triumphed through faith — in my pilots.

[*La Démocratie Nouvelle*]

THE ROMANCE OF GUÉNOLÉ LE CLINCH

BY JEAN KERDHUN

His heart bounding with joy, Guénolé Le Clinch stepped off the little puffing train which all that April evening had been carrying him onward through the sweeping moorlands of Morbihan, his native country.

Guénolé Le Clinch, a sailor of the French Merchant Marine, was returning from a tour of the world, but he was not foolishly proud of it, for he had seen little beyond sailors' hostels and cafés. A philosopher at heart, he was quite aware that men are men everywhere, no matter what their clime may be, and that as long as one has one's bottle of wine assured, there is no need of making a fuss about strange lands. He was quite certain that in the South lived black people and in the North men who were tall, taciturn, and blond.

Guénolé that evening was happy; he sang our national hymn, not the one that you mean, but our real national hymn, *Madelon*, a Breton Madelon, however, full of lingering and plaintive quavers. For Guénolé had no hopes of finding his old folk; they had died long before. It was his, that evening, to seek out his girl, Jeanne-Marie Le Bozec, a fine blonde — strong as a man. In the days of the Pardon, the thumps which she gave to the village youths who seized her and hugged her too tightly knocked them head over heels to the grass. But she was a fine girl, yes a fine girl, and once married to Guénolé, oh! what a fine couple they would be!

The air, that April night in Brittany, was of a singular softness. A wood of pines planted on the cliff, torn and twisted by the ocean winds, appeared phantasmal under the moon, and from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the moors there came sweeping a honey-like odor which, for Guénolé, was the very breath of his native land.

Presently, he found himself at the door of the first house in his village.

It was, you will understand, a 'pub.' There, a village worthy, one Picot, sold food and drink, and lodged man and beast. Guénolé entered and ordered a glass. The little common room was low ceilinged and smoky, and the niggardly light of an oil lamp scarcely penetrated to the corners. There were faces there, which Rembrandt would have liked to draw. The sailor was swiftly recognized, but a kind of uneasiness seemed to haunt his old companions. Alas, Guénolé was not long in discovering its reason, for at the first allusion which he made to his fianceé, all his neighbors shut up like clams. Finally, one of them, more courageous or perhaps more ill-natured than the others, broke to him the sad truth. Weary of waiting for him, and charmed by the *Louis d'ors* which she liked, La Jeanne-Marie had yielded to the solicitations of Le père Gourju, the waggoner of the village, a little wretch with a pointed beard which made him look like one of the three kings.

Guénolé's heart fell with an emotional crash, though to tell the truth he had not given much time to thinking of La Jeanne-Marie during his voyages; sailors are poetic only in novels, but this news, learned so brusquely, left him standing shaken before his glass of brandy, while the company about him, as if relieved from a great weight, broke out into cries and oaths.

Without saying a word, the sailor rose from his place. His love had changed into anger. He would find him and pull him by the beard, that wretched Judas! They should see! He went out and made his way down the village street. A flood of moonlight fell on the roofs of the houses, and here and there, he had glimpses of the moonlight on the sea. A tide of old memories surged about him, and as he thought over things, he realized that he loved La Jeanne-Marie less for herself than because of the fact that she was part of his own youth and its memories. And this bit of self-analysis really astounded the honest fellow. Presently, the house of the waggoner rose before him. In the courtyard, ghostly waggon shafts, lifted in air, stood before him; on the ground lay a wheel resembling a spectral spider. The door of the house was open, and a voice, the loud voice of a scolding woman, cried: 'So, you good-for-nothing! You have left the carriage with those rascals without seeing to your pay. It is going to be exactly as it was with the Rouzecs who owe us ten francs, and mock at you and me!'

A man's voice grumbled out vague excuses. Presently, the woman's voice continued in a louder vein: 'Keep still, good-for-nothing! You shall have no soup to-night, because you went to the pub after your meeting!'

'I have n't had a single drink,' wept the waggoner.

'Not a single drink? Oh, you! you! you!' Slap! A formidable slap broke the silence of the night, a slap so soundly applied that Guénolé could almost feel it burn his own cheek.

And suddenly an immense joy took possession of him. He would not need to pull that Judas by the beard, for if it had not been for Gourju, he himself, Guénolé Le Clinch, a good sailor and a fine fellow, would have received the blows of La Jeanne-Marie. With a lift of his shoulder, he caught up his sack, and the chorus of *Madelon* came singing to his lips. How good it would be at the 'pub' to which he now would be able to return with a safe conscience and without reproach.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus it was that an April night, sweet with the odor of the blossoming land, beheld the end of the romance of Guénolé Le Clinch, of the Merchant Marine.

[*The Manchester Guardian*]

THE STORY OF A GREAT MOUNTAINEER

BY LORD BRYCE

It is creditable to this country that the first full and systematic *Life of Saussure*, a biography long overdue, should come from an English pen, nor could anyone be better fitted than Mr. Freshfield, by tastes and knowledge, to undertake the duty. Of those many who think they are familiar with the name of Saussure as the first man of science who accomplished a feat which was regarded a century and a half ago very much as we now regard the discovery of the Arctic or the Antarctic Pole, few know how varied were his accomplishments, how interesting his career, how attractive his personal character.

A born naturalist who, beginning from botany, went on to meteorology, orography, and geology, making valuable contributions to the three latter sciences, he was also a bold and ardent mountain climber in days when expeditions were deemed impossible, which even second-rate mountaineers to-day think little of. He was a student, and for some time a professor, of philosophy, an enlightened educational reformer, and the master of a finished style. And he was, withal, a man of the world in what he would himself have thought the best sense of the word, one whom the most cultivated circles of Paris and London welcomed for the refinement of his mind, the polish of his manners, the modest dignity of his demeanor.

Saussure, scion of a Protestant family of Lorraine which had sought shelter in Geneva when driven from France, was born in 1740, and showed from his earliest years a passion for mountains and for the study of natural history. As a boy, he loved to climb the Salève, four miles from the city, and the Dole, the highest neighboring summit of the Jura. When two English tourists — many Englishmen went to Geneva even in those days — had made what one might almost call the discovery of Chamouni, till then a very secluded valley of Savoy unvisited by Genevese, and approachable by a road which was not fit for carriages and was infested by brigands, Saussure began in 1760 his exploration of the Mont Blanc region. Forming at once the hope of one day ascending the great mountain on which he had gazed lovingly from the shore of his own lake Leman, he offered a reward to anyone who should discover a route to the summit.

The afflux of strangers desiring to reach and walk on the glaciers was just beginning to create a class of professional guides, and in 1775 a serious reconnaissance of the possible routes was attempted. In 1786, further explorations were made, and Saussure himself succeeded, in spite of bad weather, in reaching a point higher than had ever previously, so far as authentic records go, been attained by any climber. Early next year, Jacques Balmat, a Chamouni guide, along with a local doctor named Paccard, found their way to the highest peak of the mountain. In the early autumn of the year following (August, 1787), Saussure made a fresh effort, this time with a large and well-equipped party and under favorable weather conditions. Success at last rewarded him: the long siege, comparable to the siege which the indefatigable Parrot laid to Ararat forty years later, ended in victory, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the news resounded over Europe, giving Saussure a wider fame than had been won by the far more important services he had already rendered to geological science.

Snow mountains, though their charm had begun to be felt, were then still objects of terror. Avalanches, crevasses, falling stones are, of course, real sources of danger, but we have learned how to reduce the risks, and we pay no heed to another phenomenon from which the early climbers complained that they suffered — the rarity of the air. Mount Blanc now seems to be deemed almost the only mountain on which it is felt. No one suffers on Monte Rosa at fifteen thousand feet, though it is an annoyance at eight thousand feet in Colorado and Sikkim.

In Saussure's description of the exploit, which may still be read with pleasure, there is no vain glory, no attempt to exaggerate the difficulties. Though he would certainly have been astonished to hear anyone talk of the ascent, as British climbers began to do half a century ago, as merely a long snow-walk, he seems to have long believed the top accessible, whereas he had deemed Monte Rosa inaccessible, as down to our own time many held the Matterhorn to be, and, still later, the Cimon della Pala and the Aiguille Verte.

Though the conquest of Mont Blanc was the most 'sensational incident' in Saussure's career, it was of far less real value to science than the long explorations and observations which he had already made, and continued thereafter to make, in many regions of the Alps, and which stand recorded in the volumes of his *Voyages dans les Alpes* and in many occasional essays and papers. He was a very careful and conscientious observer, one who saw everywhere problems needing to be solved which his predecessors had overlooked, ingenious in devising experiments, and with a rare faculty of inventing the instruments.

The tributes to his merits which Mr. Freshfield quotes from Humboldt, Sir Humphry Davy, James D. Forbes, Sir A. Geikie, and Dr. Mill, one of the foremost meteorologists of our time, are more than sufficient to establish his title to stand beside his comtemporaries the Scottish Hutton, the German Werner, and the English Smith as one of the founders of modern geology. Like Humboldt, Davy, and Forbes, he had an admirable gift of literary expression. Few men of science have equalled him in the power of graphic and graceful description. There is in Saussure's writing, as in that of Forbes — whose account of the view from the Col du Géant should be read along with Saussure's as admirable models of English and French descriptive style — there is in Saussure a happy blend of science and sentiment. Intense perception of and delight in the beauty of nature does not interfere with his close observation of its phenomena and his eagerness to find an explanation of them. Is it because the geologist carries a hammer and breaks the rock instead of sketching it that he is so often thought of as a Philistine without reverence for nature?

Many readers who have known Saussure as a geologist and a mountaineer will be surprised to find that he belonged to that very small class of scientific men who, being called upon to play a part in politics, have played it, reluctant as they were, with singular judgment and courage. There are no more interesting pages in the book than those which tell the story of the troubles in the tiny republic into which Saussure was reluctantly drawn by his sense of civic duty. Mr. Freshfield has given a clear and concise sketch of the constitutional struggles between the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

old-established patrician and moneyed oligarchy of Geneva, and the restless democrats who pressed for changes. Saussure belonged by birth and wealth to the former section, but he recognized the need for reform, and went a long way toward meeting the demands of the people. The story is too long to tell here, but it is singularly instructive; and indeed the whole history of Geneva, from its first written Constitution of A.D. 1387 down to our own time, is full of varied interest, and well deserves to form the subject of a historical treatise. None such seems to exist in our language. Perhaps Mr. Freshfield will render a further service to history and to Geneva by undertaking the task.

The very sight of the city, an old hill fortress round the cathedral and the bishop's palace, with a new town growing up beneath and rising on the other bank of the magnificent river, tells of many vicissitudes. In its long annals, the darkest chapter is that which records the sudden revolution of 1794, which brought Saussure's life, till then happy and peaceful, to a melancholy end. Excited and encouraged by the events that had been passing in France, the mob rose, seized a number of the leading citizens, and shot them after a mock trial. Other disorders and murders followed, and in the general confiscation of property Saussure, who, residing at the time in the country, escaped personal danger, lost all that he possessed, and was obliged to seek some means of livelihood by obtaining a professorship at Göttingen, or some other kind of scientific employment outside Geneva. Thomas Jefferson, who was then setting up that child of his heart, the University of Virginia, invited him to accept a professional chair in it, while Lord Bristol, the warm-hearted and eccentric Anglican Bishop of Derry, offered him a home in Ireland and a pension. By this time, however, the state of his health made it difficult for him to move from home. A slight paralytic stroke in 1794 was followed by a second in 1799, which closed his life before his sixtieth birthday.

A review of his career justifies the eulogium which Mr. Freshfield passes on him. 'Saussure stands revealed in the diaries and intimate correspondence which I have been allowed to handle as a singularly attractive figure. As a son, a husband, and a father, in every family relation, he showed a warmth of affection which happily met with a full return. His letters to his wife remained love letters even after their silver wedding day; he was adored by his children, two of whom were inspired by his example. He made friends wherever he went, at Paris and in England, as well as at Geneva. Fond of society, full of human sympathies, he was an interesting member of whatever circle he found himself in, whether the salons of Paris or the country houses of England or the cottages of the peasantry of the Alps.' A perusal of the materials which Mr. Freshfield has laid before us supports this estimate. The man interests us not only by what he did, but by his quality as a man, a singularly fine and elevated mind, a lovable and kindly temper, a steady loyalty to his friends, and an unswerving love of truth.

A reviewer must not forget to add that this biography, which bears marks in every page of the industry, care, and discrimination with which Mr. Freshfield and his zealous and learned collaborator, Mr. Montagnier, have done their work, contains a great deal of curious information on many subjects besides Saussure's own character and career. We have lively pictures of social life in France and in England, the country which Saussure specially admired and enjoyed, and where he en-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

countered less intoxication than that which surprised another Genevese, young James Gallatin, when he visited London half a century later.

We have entertaining anecdotes about many more or less famous personages of the times — Voltaire, Gibbon, the Emperor Joseph II, Madame Neckar and her more famous daughter, Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Tronchin, Sir William Hamilton (afterward of Naples), Buffon, Pictet. Of Bonnet, Saussure's uncle, and of Albrecht von Haller, of Bern, men famous in their day and generation but now, as Carlyle used to say, 'fallen sadly dead,' little but their names remembered, finished portraits are given. These find a fitting place in the skilfully touched picture of Geneva and Switzerland in the second half of the eighteenth century which the book sets before us. No one can read it without feeling that it helps him to understand better than before what someone has called the Century of Preparation, that comparatively placid time of our great-grandfathers, in which the quiet influences of physical science and philosophy, as well as the ferment of subterranean social forces, were urging the unconscious world on to changes of which it little dreamed. Mr. Freshfield has not only given us the picture of a blameless life, rich in varied achievement, and brought together treasures of Alpine lore scarcely accessible elsewhere, but he has also made to history a contribution worthy of his own long established reputation as a mountaineer and a man of letters.

[*The Poetry Review*]

THE AVERAGE MAN AND POETRY

BY W. J. RANDALL

It will be a red-letter day in the history of literature when people realize that the medium of an art's expression is not the art itself. This confusion of means and end is to be seen at its height in literature; in fact, exactly the same error is never committed with regard to the sister arts of painting and music. Paint and canvas are the means of painting's expression; but even inartistic persons do not suppose that a quantity of paint upon a piece of canvas constitutes a picture. Sound is the medium of music's expression; but even persons without an ear do not suppose that any sound is music. But let anybody produce a few sentences in metrical form, let anybody write a few lines which rhyme and scan, and there are hundreds who will regard the production as poetry and the author as a poet. They will think that because the materials of the art have been used the result is a work of art. They are mistaken.

The people who fall into this error are not, of course, the professed specialists; they are just average persons who take no particular interest in poetry, and to whom no form of art is particularly appealing. For them poetry, which came naturally to the nucleus of the English nation, has no compelling charm. They name any

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

metrical production poetry just as they would give a name to anything else, objectionable or otherwise. Now behold their ridiculous position: much of the so-called poetry which the average man dislikes is deserving of dislike, because it is a faulty manifestation of poetic art. Yet, the average man dislikes it not because it is bad poetry but because it bears an outward resemblance to good poetry. He scorns the author, not because the author is a bad poet, but because he has essayed to be any sort of a poet. The truth is that average people dislike poetry merely because they do not know the nature of real poetry. The question is: Would they like it if they knew? I think they would.

Unfortunately, many people have grown to regard poetry as a certain arrangement of words. 'Poetry,' says Mr. Edmund Gosse, 'is that one of the fine arts which employs rhythmical language as the medium of its expression.' Yes, language is the medium; but the medium is not the art. The writer of mere rhythmical language is no more a poet than a house painter is a Herkomer, or everybody who happens to whistle, a Kubelik. Poetry is not a certain arrangement of words and sentences: it only *includes* that condition. If disinterested people would realize this, they would begin to enjoy poetry, because they would look for the *poetic substance* instead of looking for a metrical arrangement and an alternate rhyme; they would have an eye for the essential before the incidental. That is the test — the poetic substance: the Divine fire pulsating beneath the written word, the power that compels one to forget the printed page, and drink in the wondrous stream of thought which is as a nectar of enchantment.

For the quality of the poetic gift is not strained: it floweth through a people as blood floweth through the body, a link between the occult and the known, a natural manifestation of human life holding warrant from the life superhuman. It is no prisoner, to be allowed to enter only the gateway leading to metrical language. Such masters as Ruskin, Gissing, Dickens, Froude, and of later days Mr. A. C. Benson, have written pages and pages of poetic substance, albeit they wrote in prose form. This idea was evidently in the mind of George Henry Lewes when he said of Buchanan's *Idylls and Legends of Inverburn,* I think, that if they were reduced to prose form they would still remain poems. On the other hand, such writers as Occleve, Davenant, and Waller produced a quantity of metrical language into which the light of true poetry scarcely peeps.

The average man must be educated if he is to appreciate poetic substance. Do not mistake me I have no intention of being a snob, even if that sounds like it. For a person may be a magnate in finance, a prince in social status, or a Bentley in erudition, and yet be very sparsely educated as far as poetry is concerned. Conversely, one may be a true poet and possess a mere tittle of education in the commonly accepted sense. Of course, the two may be blended, as they were in Gray: all the better when they are. The point is, that when we have lost the power of naturally appreciating the poetic, we must be educated back to the pristine frame of mind. Just as it is quite wrong to suppose that ordinary education unfailingly brings poetic appreciation, it is purely fallacious to imagine that a man of genius is uneducated because he is not educated in an academic or in a commercial sense. If a person wishes to become a violinist, it is not much use for him to grind at shorthand. He must set about educating himself in the right way.

Richard Bentley, that monument of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

classical learning, was able enough to edit Horace, but not to write Horace. Profound knowledge in one sphere may accompany as profound ignorance in another. Nobody can be universally educated; to which fact the specialism of the present day bears eloquent testimony. The average man can learn only a certain amount about a certain number of things; and therefore education is only in kind.

Take the case of Burns. Most dabblers in literary history are aware that he was uneducated, as the world views it. The 'fortnight's French' which he loved to parade in his letters, his brief course of land-surveying, and the modicum gleaned from his own humble bookshelf, combined to complete the education of the poet who was natural song personified. He was uneducated, in the ordinary sense of the term. Yet the gift of song was latent within him, and he looked to the cultivation of his splendid inheritance. He gave more to the world than a load of learning. 'Soldiers on the dusty march or round the red logs of the bivouac fire — sailors in the long, dark nights at sea amid washing waves and creaking cordage — trappers and woodmen in the ancient forests of the New World — miners crushing quartz in the golden bed of the Sacramento or the Fraser — shepherds galloping from huge flock to flock over the boundless pastures of Australia — have all had their loneliness cheered, their rugged natures softened, and the crust which gathers on the human heart through years of sin and hardship melted into tender tears, by the gentle or spirit-stirring magic of Robert Burns's songs. No lyrist goes home to the heart so straight as he.'

It may be said that to write poetry was natural to Burns. Certainly it was; for every great poet may, and does, truthfully echo in his heart the lines from *In Memoriam:*

> I do but sing because I must,
> And pipe but as the linnets sing.

And just as singing was natural to Burns, to many it is natural to appreciate without being able to demonstrate. But where appreciation does not come naturally, may it not be acquired? The reason why I should say that it *can* be acquired — remember I am speaking of the average man — is that frequently non-appreciation is the result of failure to understand the particular art, and consequently will disappear as the aim and appeal of the art is comprehended and the standpoint of the artist considered. Hidden springs of thought will be discovered, entrancing vistas will be opened to the imagination, the prophetic inspiration of the poet will be realized as an actuality; and even if it is not fully understood and partaken of, at least all objections will be dispelled, swept away like a black, sullen cloud driven by the wind from the face of the sun.

After all, what are the objections to poetry? Perhaps you will say that it does not matter what they are; that people who have a taste for literature and poetry will go in for them despite all objections; and conversely, that those who have no such taste will not be drawn to them for all the reasons in the world. There is a great deal of truth in this, but not the whole truth. The fact is, many are kept from poetry by the lurking superstition that it is something of which to be ashamed — something to be reserved for the gentleman who affects a slouched hat, a necktie as large as a sash, and an abundant, if not a superfluous, allowance of hair. Of course such a gentleman may be a poet, and a great one; but there is also the possibility that he may not: just as everybody who wears gaiters is not a bishop, nor everybody named Burns a great lyrist, nor — to extend the illustration — everybody named Swift an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eventual madman. And just as every madman is not named Swift, so every poet does not affect the details of costume above described. There are so many genuine analogies in the world that are missed, that it seems a pity to concoct a number of false ones.

Again, some are ashamed of poetry because, in their opinion, it is unmanly — something to be regarded in the same light as religion. It is not uninteresting to note that what should be the most vital factor in all men's lives is subjected to the same objection. So many persons (unlike the early Christians who went to the lions) are literally afraid to take up their standard of right and wrong from the religious aspect. One thing must not be done because it 'impedes progress'; another, because it 'threatens to undermine society'; the question of moral right and wrong is ignored. In the same manner are many literally afraid of taking an active interest in poetry; and yet, as they journey to and from their various occupations, as they go out during the luncheon hour, as they see the sunset, or perhaps an occasional sunrise — as they do or see all these things, they are witnesses of poetic activity without realizing it. They are unreflecting witnesses of spiritual evidence brought about by manifestations of the spiritual through the material; which — it may be noted incidentally — is the beginning of religion. And this lurking bashfulness, this sneaking shame, is a rare height of foolishness, simply because its essence is the ignoring of actual existence. Facts are facts, and from them there is no intellectual escape. To be ashamed of such things as goodness, holiness, asceticism, idealism, and sunsets — which are materials of poetry — is to be ashamed of the Universe. And considering that the objector to these things is a speck in the Universe, his objections scarcely argue in favor of his own significance.

These are two great objections to poetry, if not the greatest. They rest upon absolutely rickety foundations; for they assume that it is unmanly and mawkish to recognize the plainest things in the world, despite the fact that Man is one of the plainest things in the world.

All the remaining charges against poetry that I can think of do not amount to much. For instance, there is the contention that the Englishman is a practical man, with no time for dreaming, and consequently no time for poetry, which must, for some reason, be classed as dreaming. Granted, then, that the Englishman *is* a practical man, it may just be pointed out that Shakespeare was an extremely practical man. It will not require a very vigorous effort of memory to recall the fact that he held remunerative shares in the 'Globe,' and that he bought the residence upon which he had set his heart: two points worth remembering as indications of business acumen, apart from the *practical* knowledge abounding in his plays. That, if you are a Shakespearean, ought to satisfy you. If, however, you are of the Baconian persuasion, it is almost needless to mention that the illustrious viscount was a practical man of the world and of the court; even practical enough to enrich himself unlawfully. These two examples — which are only two of many possible ones — hardly lead to the belief that a true poet or man of letters must of necessity be an improvident fool.

Before dealing with the dreaming charge, alluded to already, the charge of periphrase and circumlocution may be mentioned. This again, is quite unfounded. A careful study of verse discloses the fact that verse tends to be far more condensed than prose. Take,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for instance, these lines by Sir Henry Wotton:

> How happy is he born and taught
> That serveth not another's will —
> Whose armor is his honest thought,
> And simple truth his utmost skill.

There are just two dozen words in the stanza. Let anybody set himself to paraphrase it, to write down the full meaning in prose, and he will find that the lines are a triumph in condensation.

This applies to poetry generally. Figurative speech may sometimes appear to be roundabout, when in reality it is condensed description which would require a longer form in prose. Of course, description may be left out, but that is hardly condensation. A certain amount of description is necessary, both in prose and poetry; moreover, descriptive prose writing is a style by itself, upon which great masters have expended anxious care. On the whole, then, poetry is the antithesis of periphrase: it is the acme of concise expression.

There remains the objection that poetry, as remarked above, is dreaming, and consequently no sort of company for the average Englishman, who is a practical man and a fighter. It has been shown that poetry is not inconsistent with practicability. But to take the fighter. Granted that dreaming is the possession of some imagination, and that a dreamer is one who sees a little more than the bare material beneath his nose, it would not be far wrong to say that our greatest fighters — and the greatest fighters of any nation — have been dreamers. Otherwise, to them the battlefield must needs have been something more like hell than it was. They saw not merely the cannon and the smoke, the carnage and catastrophe; nor, when they galloped into the fray, did they perceive merely naked blades and waving plumes, and merely hear the slogan and the trumpet. One cannot think that this was all. These physical signs were symbols of the inward emotion. To the warriors, there was glory in the far-flung battle-line: it was idealized by their dreaming. The warrior dreamed his hardest, perhaps, when he rode into the fray; and it is his dream of glory that has urged him on.

The poet does not deserve to be condemned without a hearing. Vex not the poet's mind — until, at least, you can fathom it. You will not vex it then; for in order to fathom it, one must understand it. And if one can but change his point of view to that of the poet, it will not be very difficult to appreciate. For when all is said and done, the real poet is a real friend of mankind. In the making of a nation the fire of poetic thought burns in the heart of the people; and throughout the nation's life it ebbs and swells with the national activity. Remember, the most enterprising and active ages have been the most poetic. This fire, like volcanic lava, demands outlet; and, like volcanic lava, bursts forth at the point of least resistance. The poet is that point. Less phlegmatic, perhaps, than his fellowmen, he lends himself more readily than they as the medium for this fiery expression of human emotion, and sings in songs of surpassing sweetness the things that others thought and would fain have spoken, but they could not.

[*The National Review*]

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE GREAT RETREAT

BY M. O. SALE

Two months before the Great Retreat of 1918, which we were destined to view in such queer perspective, an unexpected blow had befallen us. The Battalion, one of the crack units of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London Territorials, was disbanded. The four companies were dispersed to other regiments, followed soon afterward by the Quartermaster's and Headquarter's Staffs. Only the transport, with half our ordinary personnel of sixty, was spared to carry on. Our duty and destination alike were unknown, and many were the gloomy prophecies that the delay might only mean postponed disbandment after all. It was with a sense of relief, therefore, that we received one day the order to trek in the wake of the old Division through Roye and Noyon to that newest sector of the line opposite La Fère which the British had recently taken over from their French Allies.

There was, indeed, much to be thankful for in our immediate circumstances. We were all old comrades since the first months of the war; a load had just been lifted from our minds, equal almost to a reprieve, for, if you know your horse soldier at all, you will know that he regards the idea of footslogging with as much horror as the average infantryman approaches the task of holding a horse. We enjoyed, too, a glorious feeling of independence, the freedom from restraint of the small section unattached. Our officer, a newly arrived subaltern who was still finding his feet, was the youngest member of a unit in which to be twenty-five was to court the term 'Dad,' 'Old Un,' or even worse. Possessing as we did the complete equipment of a transport section, we had a field kitchen and a watercart for our own use, and ample transport for the wonderful accumulation of 'buckshee' blankets and other 'winnings' which we had amassed.

There was only one fly in the ointment — all our best animals, familiar companions through three years of toil and strife, had been taken by the B.T.O. in exchange for the scourings of the Brigade — and perhaps a worse horsed, and especially muled, section did not move in France that day. One brute, in particular, I remember, named San Fairy Ann (*cela ne fait rien*) because nothing mattered to him, or, as his driver used to explain, 'One word from me and he does what he —— well likes.' Nevertheless, it was a contented crowd that arrived one bitterly cold evening, and dossed down amid the ghastly ruins of what had once been the town of Chauny.

A word is due here about the conditions that prevailed in this part of the line, if only to serve as a background to the tremendous events that were preparing.

Oh, the delicious quiet of that sector — the creepy, eerie, *unholy* sort of calm, so I sometimes felt, that goes before a storm! Strange tales came to us of life in the trenches. Scarcely a shot was fired. Sentries lazily watched one another across the water on their beats. The fortunate enjoyed palliasses and wire beds. Troops holding the line did bouts of manual drill to pass away the time. The jade Rumor counted — I forget whether it was six or sixteen casualties in the last nine months! War was a sort of embattled peace.

Yet behind all this outward show of security was a feverish energy in the preparation of defense. Night after night our little column, now attached to the Divisional Train of A.S.C., made the long journey with engineers' material to and from the line, through a desolation accentuated by the weird silence of guns to whose continual roar we had been accustomed at Ypres and the Somme. It seemed a good life after what we had experienced, and yet — sometimes we wondered. Not in the busy daytime, of course, but at night over the camp fire, when we talked of comfort and girls and home. Especially there was one article, by Philip Gibbs, that arrested our atten-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion. It dealt with our sector; and it was ominous of much. Behind Laon and the St. Gobain Woods, I remember it concluded, 'the enemy is preparing "evil things."' Evil things! How that phrase forces itself upon the imagination! And then, to interrupt our forebodings, came the first rumors of an event which, in its fulfilment, was to give us our quaintest experience in France, and to turn the retreat, so ghastly in its reality, into something like a picnic for ourselves. Six Italian labor companies were due in the district; we were to act as their transport, and leave our good friends, the A.S.C.

It was three o'clock of a bitter morning in early March when confirmation of this came in the form of an order to be at a certain destination by 8.30 A.M. (It should have been P.M., by the way. It was on account of little mistakes like these that the army adopted the twenty-four hour clock.) However, we achieved the impossible. In torrents of sleet and snow, wading through seas of mud, which, together with pitch darkness, surrounded what we called our 'stables,' we packed and harnessed up and were on the road by dawn.

We arrived at our new home to find the Italians in full possession, ravenous after their long journey, and besieging the only two canteens in the place, one of which was run by a blackguard of a corporal who did a roaring trade, charging the newcomers double for what little French silver they possessed, and a truly Hebrew discount on the coins of their native country, which, as he very well knew would be the case, became accepted currency at a later date. We were surrounded and mobbed at once, our 'cooker' the inevitable centre of attraction. One jolly little fellow, nicknamed by us 'Grats' on the spot — his exclamation of thanks for a cold rissole — attached himself permanently to our cook and never deserted us till the retreat was over. From réveillé till 'Lights out' he varied a busy existence between woodchopping, the mincing machine, and odd jobs on the horse lines; and whatever his legitimate duty should have been with his fellow-countrymen, he seemed to be never missed. Queer, smiling old Grats, he was a willing friend, if ever there was one.

Our pleasantest fortnight in France followed. We had a large French hut to ourselves, designed for a hundred men, with ample accommodation for harness and forage. We were still rationed by the A.S.C.— always a banquet for mere infantrymen!— and yet were independent of any outside control. Perfect weather prevailed. At the same time, we were exceptionally hardworked. Leave had begun in earnest, and we were soon at a third only of normal strength. We had to serve six companies, each three hundred strong, billeted in three different villages, drawing rations from a Corps dump eight kilometres away, while our own rations had to be fetched from Division, in the opposite direction. Seven limbers, a watercart, and a mounted orderly were on duty regularly, and when you deduct from a staff of just a score, cook, N.C.O. in charge of convoy, officer's groom-batman, and the line orderlies, it leaves but a slender margin for watering, feeding, and attending to the thirty odd animals left in. Luckily, we had a large acreage of common land on which to graze them, and two mounted pickets in turn generally managed to guard the whole.

Of the Italians it is very difficult to speak. Report placed them alternatively as disabled men, or weedings from the army of ill-fortune. Militarily, we never took them as a criterion of Italian arms as a whole. (They were only a labor corps, after all, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of course unarmed.) Individually they had as many peculiarities in our eyes as we, no doubt, had in theirs. Conspicuous was a passion for washing their handkerchiefs and little white collars in our horse-trough in the cold of dawn, and then standing about in greatcoats through the heat of the day. This standing about and blocking the highway seems to be a feature of Italian life. Nothing ever dispersed the groups — except one vicious little roan pony we had. Occasionally, a small party would march off as if to work, but the nature of their labor always remained a mystery, and, in any case, is of no consequence, as it was soon a good thirty miles behind the German lines. Always they were excitable people — what you might call 'intense.' In conversation about business matters this was brought home to us most.

Communication with them was a formidable task. One officer's cook there was, indeed, who knew English well enough as regards the words, but his pronunciation was like a Scotsman's Belgian, and on the first day he retired in high dudgeon because his little mess of six officers could not have a field kitchen to itself, and he helped us, afterward, only under protest. So, knowing no Italian ourselves and the Italians knowing no English, we conversed for the most part in French, which neither party knew. At pidgin-French we were, through long experience, an easy first, but in gesticulation they had us 'beaten to a frazzle.' One or two of their officers spoke it fluently, so we never caught a word. Our own officer's French was a thing at which mules laid back their ears and wept. He helped us quite a lot. The farrier bloke once tried Latin, till someone threw a hammer at his head. The language question was, in fact, a difficulty, and many misunderstandings arose, but there was always one way out. Whenever argument failed to convince, we did what we wanted in despite.

Perhaps the most amusing feature of those Anglo-Italian times were the sing-songs we held at night. Inside the hut we had a gigantic wood fire, which blazed away merrily despite the regular 'Jerry up,' and this proved a great attraction to the ice cream men. About a score would usually roll in of an evening and group themselves around, while our officer graced us regularly with his presence, though his taste in songs and jokes was not one to raise the tone of a bargees' smoking concert. Then, alternately, either side would favor the company with song — 'Dixie' and a bit of grand opera; 'The long, long trail' and one of those jumpy, chanson things that the Latin nations love. It made a strange picture in the leaping firelight. Not one of our party could really sing, but on the other hand none could be accused of backwardness in coming forward. Always there was some hero ready to bray his way through the verses, while the chorus — well, there we did flatter ourselves we were good. The Italians, like the Welsh, were all musical. One, a consumptive, narrow-chested boy, six and a half feet tall — a most unlikely type — was a member of Caruso's company and sang divinely. A humorous little chap who took the chansons was an actor and worked himself up into a frenzy of excitement over what the nobility of our music-hall stage would no doubt entitle 'Song and Dance.'

Besides singing, we had intervals of conversation — that is to say, both sides talked hard in their own language and to their own complete satisfaction, in a manner that is libellously supposed to be peculiar to the other sex. There was no 'Lights out' or official closing time to these pleasant occasions. We

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knocked off when we wanted to. Happy free-and-easy times!

One day a genius (myself) suggested that a race meeting would be a desirable thing. We had a natural race-course of grand turf, just a kilometre round. To mark it out plainly and erect a jump was simple, and practice began the same night. Flat race, tug-of-war on horseback, wrestling, jumping (style), and saddling-up race (two hundred yards on foot and the rest mounted) completed the programme. The draw and general arrangements were left in my hands, and I also acted as starter and judge and 'made the book'! The thing proved a great success, and what with the usual crop of 'ifs' and 'ans,' it was at once agreed to hold another meeting to settle disputed points — as, for instance, that if A had ridden such-and-such a pony against B, instead of C, the positions would have been reversed, and so on. Two or three matches of this description were arranged, and a walking match for heavy drafts added to the programme, which was to come off at once. This was March 20, and we were still arguing various points over the fire, when the T.O. came in with grave and ominous news. We were to 'stand by' from that hour; 'Jerry' was coming over in the morning all along the line!

How accurate that information was is matter of history now. I slept restlessly that night. There was an instinctive feeling of crisis in the air, a presage of disaster which it is difficult to describe. Long before dawn we were roused by the barrage and the crash of exploding shells. I dressed myself and went out. It was misty and intensely cold. At Abbecourt we must have been twelve kilometres from the line, but enemy artillery was methodically searching all likely spots — the railway, the dumps, Ognes, and the Noyon-Chauny road. Presently a battery was turned on our own immediate neighborhood, which played on us all day, sometimes unpleasantly close, but mostly on some marshy ground across the road. Heavies meanwhile were whirring monotonously overhead to Dampcourt and the railhead at Appilly. We watered at six and carried on as usual.

The Italians' quarters were in a state of ferment. Orders or no orders, the majority had got together their belongings in the road, expecting to move, while some had already scattered about the fields, though no shell had yet dropped nearer their huts than a hundred yards! That day, the Germans did not make a great advance territorially, though they broke through the greater part of our scanty defenses, but next morning our convoy found that the dump had moved back to Crisolles, which necessitated a very long journey before rations could be drawn. It was the first definite sign that a retreat was beginning; and a second followed close upon its heels when in the evening we received orders to move two companies of Italians from their quarters at Autreville across the Oise.

We found their rear party waiting for us at the roadside, eager enough to be away. We had eight limbers with us, and they had an accumulation of property enough to fill about eighteen G.S. wagons and a few pantechnicons. It consisted of two varieties: (1) necessaries, such as cooks' stuff, bivvy sheets, rations, and so forth, and (2) rubbish. The latter, much the larger half, was what they insisted on loading, and after arguing to no effect till it was dark we were obliged to make a compromise, each side loading against the other, and thus we succeeded in bringing along, in spite of them, some of the things they would really require, which was just as well, as they never

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

saw the remainder of the stuff again.

The loading was a disgrace to the British army, and on the top of that the officers all expected to ride; but we pitched them off eventually and made a start. There was no discipline, I might remark, among the Italians, and we treated officers and men alike with scant ceremony. We reached our destination about one in the morning, a village where two other companies had been billeted for some time past, and here a new difficulty arose. Not a soul was to be seen. No instructions had been given as to where the newly arrived companies were to be found, nor had anyone thought of leaving a guide to take us to the spot. At the mess, we had many invitations to wine, but on the great question that concerned us — much speech indeed, but nothing intelligible. It was 3 A.M. before we discovered the place, a mile from the village, hastily dumped our loads and hurried home.

That morning our own two companies, or as many of the men as had not already disappeared on their own account, set off for the neighborhood of Noyon; and we knew afterward, what we guessed at the time, that we should have accompanied them. Our position had indeed become an impossible one. While still having to ration daily all six companies, we were now left twenty kilometres away from any of them, as well as from the dump, which was in constant retreat from the spearhead of the German advance. In fact, the confusion was universal. From that time we were practically out of touch with both Corps and Division, who were equally out of touch with one another. We drew rations, therefore, direct from railhead, discovering its whereabouts for ourselves from day to day.

Late that evening came part, at least, of our own long-expected orders. Six limbers, under the sergeant, were to proceed toward Guiscard, or wherever the Italians might prove to be — he would have been a bold man who dared reckon on anything definite in those days — and keep with them wherever they might go. Of that party I was not a member, and cannot recount their adventures, which were neither few nor unexciting. On one occasion they nearly drove into the enemy, while on another they left the sergeant sitting on guard over some rations at one end of a village, while the Germans were marching in in fours at the other. He was discovered by a mounted policeman at the last moment and ran for his life. He might have done better to stay, for he was killed soon afterward, poor chap!

The order for the rest of us to pack up soon followed. Already the rattle of machine guns was coming closer. Chauny was falling or fallen. But picture the condition we were in. A transport section has a normal complement of sixty men. We had been reduced in January to thirty-two, of whom a dozen were still away on leave. Seven more had just left us, taking between them only thirteen horses. We found, when we buckled to it that we had exactly three and a half horses each, all told. It was impossible to carry with us all our material, and what we left behind then we left for good. Next day when we sent back for it, the place could not be approached, and some very good forage and saddlery the enemy obtained in this way. The spare animals we roped behind the limbers two by two. The men not driving led the rest. If there had been any more we should have had to pretend they were dogs and let them follow behind.

Our destination was Morlancourt, near Noyon, where we fell in with a party of Italians, and I shall always re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gret that place, for it was there that I came across that soldier's mirage, the ideal billet, a lock-up stable for the horses, and for ourselves a room complete with table, chairs, fireplace, and straw-bottomed wicker beds, once the abode of M.M.P.'s, than whom there are no more comfort-loving men. But, alas! we were quickly on the move again — through Noyon, packed with traffic and giving a general impression that all the French were going to the line and all the English hurrying away from it, past hospitals and loaded trains, guns and ambulances, nurses and staggering wounded, and ever the swelling piteous streams of refugees, to Ribécourt, on the Compiègne highroad. Here, with a shout of relief, one of the sergeant's party hailed us. In the saddle continuously since we parted, hurrying between a flying dump and flying Italians with food, they had almost despaired of seeing us again.

And now a further journey confronted us of thirty miles, tired as were men and horses alike. It had been determined to take the Italians right out of the battle zone, behind the still quiet French lines. Already they were assembling in the darkness, and a curious array they made. At such a juncture, least of all were they likely to fall in and maintain any military order. They just trudged wearily along in groups, straggling across the road, or strove to mount the overloaded limbers till we flogged them off. They had long ago dumped everything that was useful to them, equipment included, and we all, in consequence, had 'buckshee' Italian haversacks, and excellent pairs of Italian boots. But they still clung obstinately to their rubbish — old campstools, curious bits of wood, shell cases, and souvenirs of every kind. Quite a number even pushed wheelbarrows. It might have made a great picture, 'The Retreat from Noyon,' as they stumbled through the shadows, blending admirably with those other road companions of ours, the homeless ones of France.

It was seven o'clock when we pulled into Estrées-Saint-Denis, swaying in the saddle for want of sleep, and halted in the broad High Street. The village had experienced its first air raid a few hours before, several houses being totally wrecked by aerial torpedoes with many casualties, and feet and things were still being discovered by weeping neighbors as we had breakfast. The town was no exception to the general congestion, confusion, and panic that prevailed. Some day, I suppose, the history of the Fifth army's retreat will be written. At the time the general public, spared the worst details, knew nothing of the real magnitude of the disaster. Several of our boys, returning off leave, were caught into the vortex as impromptu infantrymen, and recounted their experiences to us afterward, nor have I ever heard a first-hand narrative that disagreed.

The truth is that the fourteenth, eighteenth, and fifty-eighth divisions, which held the extreme south of our line, fought magnificently so long as they were able to maintain their formations, and slaughtered the field-gray hordes in thousands till they were overwhelmed by a pressure of twenty times their weight. It was only after their virtual annihilation that panic set in among the hastily improvised parties of non-combatants who were rushed up to the front and pinned there against the enemy by a cordon of mounted police with revolvers, and whose one object in life was to evade both sets of adversaries and put as great a distance as possible between themselves and the firing line. Estrées, like all the other back area villages, was full of these derelicts. Many lay in the woods by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

day and only moved by night. Hundreds straggled down to the bases, even as far as Havre, by train or on foot. Others disappeared into the French zone. Quite a number succeeded in the confusion in attaching themselves to R.A.M.C. units, and were not traced and identified till days afterward by a thorough sifting of all patients without Field Medical Cards, many of them lying snugly in bed in the base hospitals. We ourselves attached three such stragglers, lost transport men, to our own depleted strength, and right glad we were to welcome them, when on the third day of our stay at Estrées a posse of police arrived. All men in khaki were questioned, and a motly mob of about forty wanderers were at length assembled, given a short musketry lesson, and marched off up the line. Some of us almost shared their fate till our officer appeared, after which, the Italians being of course unarmed, we were troubled no more. The roads presented a striking spectacle, being choked with traffic. In addition to the stream of refugees, vast masses of transport, French and English, poured through incessantly, or halted long periods waiting for orders. It was impossible to guess how the battle was going; we had no orders and no news. Owing to the curious configuration of the line, roads which you would think led away from it really led to it; squadrons of cavalry trotted through from time to time, bound no one knew whither; and constant rumors fomented and racked the anxiety in men's minds. So shaken, indeed, was the general morale that one colonel of R.F.A. called his men on parade and announced officially a gigantic British drive in Belgium, and I have since heard of other cases of this sort of thing being done. Meanwhile the inhabitants were preparing to leave, and the inevitable 'Jocks' offering cut prices for *vin blanc* in bulk, which were never accepted. Rather abandon it altogether to the enemy, than consent to be robbed like that!

On the fourth day, orders reached the Italians to entrain on the morrow and hand themselves over to the keeping of the French, and there ensued an example of retributive fate so stern and just, as to compare with the ending of the war itself. To understand the circumstances, you must remember that the army has a standard of honesty peculiarly its own. There is no such thing as stealing in His Majesty's forces — 'winning' is what it is called. And whereas the code strictly forbids the winning of private property of individuals, it is quite legitimate — indeed, meritorious — for one unit to win from another, or both from the common enemy, 'The Army,' while quite superior officers encourage their batmen to make them comfortable in ways as tortuous and open to suspicion as a first return of income tax.

With this preface it must be admitted that we were in the habit of winning stray items from the Italians' ration limbers — a tin of milk, a bite of cheese, and so on; not because the sufferers were Italians, but because we were transport drivers, and it was the usual thing. There was an element of sport about it, too, for a couple of Italians went with each limber as loaders, and they soon got wise to all our tricks. The evening arrived, then, when we were to draw their rations for the last time, and we resolved on a bumper win, just to speed the parting guest. (It was typical of the inconsistency of human nature, and I do not relate it in any boastful spirit, that at this time we were voluntarily going short ourselves in order to feed as many as possible of the refugees with which the place was crowded.)

It was midnight when we drew out from the dump at Rémy; it was pitch

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dark, and by luck we had no Italians with us. I was driving the rear limber, containing our own rations for two days, and as I made a triumphal procession up the whole line of the convoy, each driver threw in rich contributions from the Italians' store. I parked by our field kitchen, tied down the covers securely, saw to my horses, and went to bed. Came dawn, and with it our cook — and Justice! Of all our winnings and our honestly drawn rations not one particle remained. The Italians, before entraining, had won the lot! Ye Gods! how we laughed; but it had its sad side, too — the women and children whom we had invited to breakfast and who did not comprehend our French! We should have had nothing that day if some chickens had not strayed into the horse lines, whereupon we tossed up whether we should have them — and the chickens lost!

It was now our duty, failing any other definite orders, to rejoin the Divisional Train. For some days we had been endeavoring to learn their whereabouts, but it was now essential, since with the passing of the Italians we had lost our *raison d'être*. Luckily, the railhead moved back that day to Compiègne, where the Divisional Supply Officer met us; and there my narrative must practically end. We joined the A.S.C. at Nampeel, a bleak and desolate place enough, where we lay under our limbers and shivered, except one night when we had just crawled into a warm, comfortable cave and were turned out to make room for French troops who never arrived. (The 'French troops' were in reality some English sergeant-majors, who wanted the cave themselves.) Thence to Longpont and by train to Amiens, at the crisis of the German push, where, just below Boves, on the Amiens-Saint-Just railway, the French field guns were firing across us as we rattled by, and then, after a few days, to Abbeville for disbandment. A week at an Infantry Base Depot for equipment (but not for training) and, hey, presto! to the Naval Division at Aveluy Wood and in the firing line.

[*The Sunday Times*]

STRINDBERG

BY EDMUND GOSSE

In his latest volume, Mr. Max Beerbohm gives a brief enthusiastic sketch of Luntic Kolniyatch, that 'red star' of European literature, who murdered his grandmother and poured forth from a madhouse a 'message' which 'has drowned all previous messages.' His 'burning faith in a personal devil' seems to his disciples to stamp Kolniyatch rather as an optimist than as, what he is superficially deemed, a 'railing and raging pessimist.' Mr. Beerbohm makes fun of this typical maniac, and of all his silly worshippers, in Max's most felicitous manner; but the satire is not merely amusing, it has a sharp point of appropriateness.

The close of the nineteenth century saw an extraordinary amount of attention paid to a number of Continental geniuses, several of whom became ultimately mad, or were tainted by some unpleasant form of monomania. No idolatry of æsthetes will persuade the world that Nietzsche was sane or that Sacher-Masoch was normal. These men, and others of scarcely less eminence, were the victims of cerebral disease in an acute form, but criticism has to determine whether, in spite of their mental aberration, what they produced had an independent value which counterbalanced the craziness. There have been many men of beautiful genius who have walked in a radiance which was far from resembling the light of common day. On the other hand, the greatest writer whom Swedish litera-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ture has produced walked in a fuliginous and sulphurous darkness which was manifestly just as abnormal. How far should the madness of Strindberg affect our appreciation of his writings? — this is the question which has to be faced.

August Strindberg was born in 1849, a few weeks after the marriage of his father, an unsuccessful grocer, to his mother, a barmaid. His childhood, by his own account, was singularly wretched. His parents beat him; he slept where he could, on a chair or an ironing board; 'warfare raged incessantly between his brothers' and himself, and they were fourteen in family. When he wrote the very copious history of his first thirty years, published in 1886, his mind seethed with resentment. The reader of this curious autobiography seems to hear a hiss in every page, with occasionally a snarl and an explosion, like the voice of an enraged tom-cat down a passage. Probably, the picture was darkened by memory, and his childhood not really so diabolical, but the main thing is that Strindberg thought it had been atrocious.

All through his youth he was undoubtedly very poor, very ambitious, and very indignant. At the age of thirty he suddenly became famous as the author of *The Red Room*, a work which, strangely enough, Mr. Björkman scarcely names in his biographical preface, although its publication was the turning point in Strindberg's career, and of far-reaching importance. From this time forward, although Strindberg was always in hot water, and showing an amazing ingenuity in alienating everybody who presumed to take an interest in him, the reputation of his volcanic force was ever on the rise, and when he died — on May 14, 1912 — his funeral was celebrated by the whole Swedish nation. In fact, neither Thomas Hardy, nor Anatole France, nor even Ibsen has been the object of so much racial infatuation as August Strindberg.

It is natural that so strange and so fluent a writer — Strindberg is the author of more than one hundred works — should attract curiosity, but it is legitimate to wish, in the interests of Sweden, that her greatest poet had been a man of saner, or at least of more amiable and human, instincts. His 'message' — as it is the cant of the day to call it — is mainly a message of hatred. He hated everybody, but he had a peculiar animosity against women, a sentiment which he was supposed to base upon three unlucky marriages. Of the first of these (he threw that wife out of an upper window) he has given an account so vivid and so vindictive that the printing of it in Sweden was prohibited; I possess the German *editio princeps* of this rare and refreshing fruit of anti-feminism, and can vouch for its astounding bitterness. It gushes like a fountain of vitriol. Strindberg was, he says himself, driven forward by 'an irresistible craving and turmoil of the brain' to tell one story of his life after another with inexorable cynicism.

One of his most infatuated admirers points to his 'coarse language and unsavory references to physical life' as one of the proofs of his 'perfect frankness.' He was attracted to sexual confession, we are told on the same authority, by 'the narcosis of alcohol.' I do not quite know what this means, yet, like Queen Victoria, I am not amused. The gifts of the spirit and the intellect — and Strindberg was prodigiously endowed with both — are surely not showered upon a man, that he may poison the wells of life with them; and yet it is essentially to destroy the illusions of hope and love, to suggest treason through affection, and to storm in anger against everything in heaven and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

earth, that the greater part of Strindberg's poems and novels are directed. He began a tragedy with the title *Jesus of Nazareth*, which he tells us was 'intended to crush Christianity completely and for all time'; we may find a grim satisfaction in learning that, for once, he 'succumbed to the magnitude of the subject,' but is not this like Luntic Kolniyatch? If nations receive the authors they deserve, Sweden ought to feel morally uncomfortable in the possession of the author of *Inferno*.

The last thing, however, that I wish to do is to deny the force of Strindberg's writing or the legitimate claim which he makes on our attention. The merits and demerits of this strangest of writers cannot, however, be decided in ten minutes. The volume before us contains three specimens of his least disputable writing, the dramatic. *The Link* was written in 1877, during the brief period of Strindberg's first marriage, when for a short time he was relieved from his intense mental irritability. His wife had obtained a divorce from an earlier husband in order to marry the poet, and, although two or three years later language was insufficient to express Strindberg's loathing of the lady, for the moment he was peaceful. This respite is reflected, though in a very Strindbergian manner, in *The Link*, which offers us a daring, but not outrageous, satire on some of the anomalies of Swedish law.

The play suggests the form later on to be made familiar by M. Brieux, and the action takes place entirely in a provincial court-house. The case of a peasant girl whom a farmer has caught stealing first comes on; as he presents no witnesses, the farmer, a most excellent man, is heavily fined for having 'libelled' the girl by accusing her of the theft. The girl is let off scot-free, although everyone knows that she is a rogue. Strindberg, with much sprightliness, shows that in the state of the law, this ridiculous result is inevitable. Then we pass to the divorce, or separation, of a baron and baroness, who begin to plead very politely, but, losing their tempers, drag one another down into an abyss of mutual ignominy. The moral of the piece seems to be the old one that 'the law is an ass,' a condition for which, however, the dramatist seems to propose no remedy.

The rest of the selection dates from Strindberg's complete maturity, when he had reached the summit of his technical command over language. Mr. Björkman, whom I suppose to be a Swede long resident in the United States, has translated the plays carefully into very fair American. He hardly does justice, however, to the Prologue of *The Dream Play*, which might almost be a scene out of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. The play itself — which should be read in connection with *To Damascus*, a trilogy not, I think, as yet translated — is very difficult to follow; it has been described as 'pre-cosmic' and time and space do not exist in it. I find myself powerless to analyze a work so stupendous, so incoherent, and yet so beautifully written.

To the same year, 1901, when Strindberg was passing through a phase of wild ascetic mysticism, belongs the double play of *The Dance of Death*, with which Mr. Björkman closes his selection. This is a much more interesting specimen of Strindberg's work than either of the preceding. It is very difficult to give an idea of a work so unusual, even so monstrous in form; *The Dance of Death* is a squalid story of to-day, the realism of which is redeemed by half-inspired or wholly insane flights into the highest heavens of Buddhistical ideality. This is certainly one of Strindberg's ablest and most characteristic productions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[*The English Review*]

BELLONA

BY DOROTHEA STILL

Out of the dozing embers of my throne
I stretch a hand toward my smould'ring torch;
Slowly, my sleep-dimmed eyes make furtive search
Into the shrouded souls of little men.
Once more
A spark thrown out upon the dusty earth
Would catch the tinder of a thousand hearts
To feed the greedy fierceness of my lust:
The gore
Long since congealed, in thirsty rivulets
Would run to newly-risen lakes of blood —
As of yore
My starving nostrils lift to scent their prey,
My hungry fingers groping for a sword.
Is my name
Indeed forgotten, and my ancient fame
Entombed in shame?
Men shall know
Me goddess; and their days shall glow
Within the furnace of my reign below.
— Behold, I wake,
My quenchless torch to take!

I stride in glory half across the world:
Nay, all awide the earth, and thrust my torch,
Afire and murky with the steam of blood,
Into the depth of Heaven's serenity.
My brazen cry
Shatters the little people as they run
Abroad with cringing haste to spread my flames,
Awhile my frenzy rocks the whirling globe.
Triumphant, I
Follow the victims worthy of my fire,
And shriek my victory in Heaven's face;
Chant, as I fly,
My mutilation of the Gods' dear gifts.
See, I have fouled their beauty in the muck
And smoking devastation of my trail:
The shining pride of youth is turned to shame,
Strong limbs in bitter travesty of honest age.
Of age, I tear
The slowly trembling heart-strings as I pass,
The dying odors of a flowering love
Send sweetness to my nostrils, and inspire
My restless wings to find a stronger foe.
Shivering fear
And hollow famine are my serving men
To sap the strength of mighty motherhood
Till all her power ebbs beneath my feet;
My reeking spear,
Swift-driven, finds its truest aim.
With her despair
Crying a spent defiance at my hated name,
She, too, is hurled
Into the bloody triumph of my flame-swept world.

All that is god-like in these mortal souls
Is scorched and writhing underneath my heel.
I have prevailed. And when the kindly dust
Shall cover up the carnage of my reign
And men
Tell of my slumber as the sleep of death,
Again
My grim, undaunted wakening shall not fail:
Again, I shall prevail.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1849 LARGEST FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY 1921
Chartered by the State of Massachusetts
Incorporated 1849 Charter Perpetual

SPRINGFIELD

FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY
OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
CASH CAPITAL $2,500,000.00

Seventy-second Annual Statement, January 1, 1921

ASSETS

Cash on hand, in Banks and Cash Items	$2,724,400.79
Cash in hands of Agts. and in course of collection	2,182,878.25
Accrued Interest, etc.	377,812.07
Real Estate Unincumbered	335,000.00
Loans on Mortgage (first lien)	2,600,770.00
Bank Stocks	2,589,856.00
Railroad Stocks	1,677,340.00
Miscellaneous Stocks	1,098,047.00
Government Bonds	2,737,000.00
Railroad Bonds	1,114,391.00
State, County and Municipal Bonds	1,241,380.00
Miscellaneous Bonds	1,696,000.00
TOTAL ASSETS	**$20,374,875.11**

LIABILITIES

CAPITAL STOCK	**$2,500,000.00**
Reserve for Re-Insurance	**11,368,661.47**
Reserve for all unpaid Losses	**1,732,795.96**
Reserve for all other Liabilities	**540,000.00**
Reserve for January 1921 Dividend	**200,000.00**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**$16,341,457.43**
NET SURPLUS	**4,033,417.68**
SURPLUS TO POLICY HOLDERS	**6,533,417.68**
LOSSES PAID SINCE ORGANIZATION	**85,419,297.27**

. W. DAMON, President
. G. BULKLEY, Vice-President
H. HILDRETH, Secretary
H. WILLIAMS, Treasurer

W. B. CRUTTENDEN, Assistant Secretary
W. A. HERBERT, Assistant Secretary
C. L. GARNETT, Assistant Secretary
F. A. SCHLESINGER, Assistant Treasurer

Western Department, Chicago, Illinois
HARDING & LININGER, Managers
G. CARLISLE, Assistant Manager
C. E. VARLEY, Assistant Manager
L. P. VOORHEES, Cashier
Resident Director
A. F. DEAN

Pacific Coast Department, San Francisco, Cal.
EO. W. DORNIN, Manager
JOHN C. DORNIN, Assistant Manager

Marine Department, New York City
ALBOT, BIRD & CO., Inc., General Marine Managers, 63-65 Beaver Street

Agencies in all Prominent Localities throughout the United States and Canada

BOSTON AGENTS

)Brion, Russell & Co. 108 Water St.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LIVING AGE

FOR NEXT WEEK WILL CONTAIN AMONG OTHER THINGS

A WEEK OF THE WORLD

Gabriel d'Annunzio at Fiume, from *La Grande Revue;* **German Reparation Again,** from the *Manchester Guardian;* **The Bologna Report,** from *Giornale d'Italia;* **Japan and the Future of the Orient. III,** from *Le Correspondant;* **Briand's Seventh Cabinet,** from *L'Opinion;* **Queue Philosophy,** from *La Vanguardia.*

THE RIGHTS OF YOUTH — *By Edward Ceci*

THE IMMORTAL WHITE WHALE — *By Augustine Birrel*

THE WARDROBE — *By E. V. Luca*

AN ARMISTICE ANNIVERSARY IN CENTRAL AFRICA — *By F*

THE HOBO: An Argentine Tale — *By Federico S. Merten*

HENLEY THE VAINGLORIOUS — *By Robert Lyn*

If you are not a subscriber, and would like to receive the magazine regularly fill out coupon below.

The Living Age,
8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass.

Gentlemen: Enclosed find $6.00 for my subscription to THE LIVING AGE for one year, beginning.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....CITY.....

3-1-21

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED